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Introduction

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MODERN REVIEW

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COMMENT

Communist Manifesto: 1848-1948

In these times of rapid transition, when the frightening acceleration of basic world conflicts keep our eyes fastened to the headlines where we feel our fate is being decided, it may appear strange that a magazine devotes a large part of an issue to discussion revolving around a work published a hundred years ago. And yet such stock-taking is more than ever necessary today. The *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels is deeply woven into the texture of our times—so much so that it would be practically impossible to write a history of the *Manifesto* without at the same time producing a history of the world labor movement or even a general history. An examination of the impact of the *Manifesto* becomes an examination of our recent past.

The fact that a manifesto written 100 years ago can still elicit violent disagreement and passionate argument, as the following pages in some measure bear witness, is precisely a measure of its vitality and present-day importance.

It is not our purpose here to expound a theory as to "what Marx really meant." Yet one point needs to be stressed. It has become fashionable to portray Marx as the dry and fanatical prophet of the necessities of history, as a kind of passionless Grand Inquisitor who attempts to rule in the name of history by the iron law of inevitability. Prophet of the State! Grand Priest of Efficiency! Patron Saint of Stalinism! No conception could be farther from the truth. Marx can be understood only when we realize that he revolted against the escape of the social sciences from control of morality. Marx was struck by the de-humanization and alienation which deprived man under capitalism of his essential human dignity and concluded that this could be overcome only through socialism, which is humanism. The man who could write that "man is the supreme being for mankind" and that we must "overthrow all conditions in which man is a degraded, servile, neglected and contemptible being" has nothing in common with the straw man which anti-socialists, and sometimes, alas, even socialists have attempted to create.

Some twenty years ago Werner Sombart, the famous German sociologist who at that time was already a violent "anti-Marxist," declared that he would be very happy if as many of his predictions

would come true as was already then the case in relation to Karl Marx' prophecies. Yet it seems probably that many of the concrete findings of Marx will be of precious little use when we attempt to grapple with the problems of our day. As in the case of every orthodoxy, Marxist orthodoxy, instead of providing the instruments most appropriate to deal with the issues of our time, tends to retard and hinder this particular productive process. But what is important are not the concrete results of Marx' investigations, but rather his methods and basic intentions. These, we believe, are perhaps even more relevant today than they were in his time.

The European labor movement has been decisively fashioned by the initial message that a few obscure refugees launched in 1848. This is not to imply that that message was not often misunderstood, the theory distorted to conform to day-by-day practice. But without the *Manifesto,* the development of Europe's mass socialist movement is inconceivable. As the Declaration of the Rights of Man was the declaration of independence of the bourgeois citizen, so the *Manifesto* was the declaration of the rights of labor—and since 1848 the hopes, desires and aspirations that it aroused and helped formulate could never again be suppressed.

Diplomatic Fiction and Social Reality

The failure of the London Conference was complete. The four foreign ministers did not agree even to disagree. The only thing to do was to adjourn *sine die* and, perhaps, forever. It is probable that the Council of Foreign Ministers, as a more or less permanent institution, is dead. There is little reason for either mourning or cheers.

It should be clearly understood that such conferences could function only so long as Moscow could get something (or hope to get something) out of them. When the Soviet rulers realized there was nothing to get, they began using the conferences exclusively for propaganda purposes. What was going on in London was no longer a real struggle. This was being fought out on other fronts.

Some commentators have concluded that these conferences were wrong diplomatically and that some other method should be tried. One used to hear talk of an affliction called "parliamentary cretinism." What we are now suffering from evidently is "diplomatic cretinism"—lack of understanding that there is no possible "diplomatic" solution if one of the powers concerned demands everything but will grant nothing. At the present time there are no diplomatic means to *force* Soviet

Russia to release her strangle-hold on Eastern Germany for instance, or to abandon her sabotage of the Marshall Plan. Admitting this is not to say that there are no means available to resist her political aggression. To accomplish this one must concentrate on the real field of struggle—as was done recently both in France and in Italy.

Soviet Russia did not suffer a defeat in London, but she did in France. It was her first serious political set-back since the war, even though not complete and definitive. To speak in military terms, the recent Communist offensive in France—as well as in Italy—was one with "limited objectives." It was not the final struggle for power in either case; the Communists did not mobilize all their resources. They did not employ their armed formations—except briefly in Rome in a mere demonstration in connection with their "war of nerves."

It is obvious that Moscow has an almost superstitious fear of the Marshall Plan. It fears the economic rehabilitation of that part of Europe not under its domination. Therefore the task of the Communist parties in this part of Europe is to do everything possible to prevent the success, or even inauguration, of the Plan. In this regard, even their defeat in France and Italy had a certain disruptive nuisance value. However it meant an important loss of prestige for the Communist parties and for Soviet Russia herself.

How and why the Communists were defeated is even more important than the defeat itself. We are not referring here to the efficiency—rather unexpected—of the police nor to the firmness of the governments. It is questionable that the police would have been so effective if they had been confronted with a real revolutionary upheaval. The London *Economist* maintains that in France the Communists were defeated by the common sense of the Common Man. This is of utmost importance, especially because in this case the Common Man happened to be, in the main, the workers of France. The majority of the French working class simply did not follow the Communist dictates—and this despite their miserable situation. Their grievances were real and remain extremely serious. They are the victims of badly conceived and inefficient government policy. It should be easy to persuade them to strike *en masse*. But the majority of French workers refused to allow themselves to be misused for what clearly emerged as the political aims of the French Communist Party —a party whose aims were only too obviously those of the Soviet Government and conflicted with the vital interests of the workers themselves. The common sense of the common worker enabled him

to see this. His understanding constitutes the decisive reason for the Communist defeat.

But this defeat, may we again point out, is not complete and definitive. Nor does it provide a remedy for a really intolerable situation. The laws passed by the French Parliament are in part sensible but also in part extremely objectionable. They may become dangerous instruments in the hands of the worst reactionary elements in France. In any case, they offer no remedy either for the economic evils. These evils exist and can be mitigated in part at least by sound economic policy which need not wait upon the Marshall Plan. Unless something is done immediately to relieve some of the pressure on the workers, their despair will mount continuously. If that happens, it will be much more difficult to defeat the next Communist offensive.

In Memorium: Victor Serge

Our friend and collaborator, Victor Serge, is dead. It would be superfluous here to review his life history. Most of our readers are familiar with the basic outlines of his career.

What we feel the need of saying is simply that our loss is much more than personal. One of the few exemplary figures of the international socialist movement, one of the few of our generation who never impaired his basic integrity, who never compromised with the powers-that-be, is missing from our ranks.

Serge was a writer and a socialist—and never could the two be separated. This is why he could only be repelled by the smug satisfaction with which so many artists of our generation embrace so willingly a sense of alienation, deploring and yet secretly taking pride in the lack of communication between the writer and his public. Serge was always of his times, always in the thick of the struggle—yet never on the side of the "victors." He knew that in our times politics and the fate of the artist could not be divorced. He was the perennial exile, the homeless one, the haunted, who had worked and struggled and written for the workers of a score of countries. In this broader sense, he had a home and he had an audience. His public were his comrades in arms. Basically, this eternal refugee had roots which our modern radicals, who perpetually deplore and bemoan their alienation—at least in public—lack.

For Serge people were not raw material for the making of history or of books—grist for the mill. They were persons, individuals of full human stature and inherent human dignity. He was not a socialist because he wanted a more "efficient" society. The young printer's apprentice who joined the French Anarchist movement when the century was young as well as the sick, tired, yet undefeated libertarian socialist, forced to die slowly in Mexico because no other country would grant him an entry visa, was a socialist because of his burning thirst for a more just, a more human society in which the individual would be able to acquire that dignity denied him under the dehumanizing rule of the totalitarian state and the brutalizing and degrading effects of the factory system.

Serge was a brilliant and gifted novelist, historian and socialist theoretician. His *Russia—Twenty Years After, Men in Prison, Portrait of Stalin, Birth of Our Strength, Long Dusk* (reviewed in this issue), and many other volumes testify to that. But his *chef d'oeuvre* was his own life—a life of truly heroic proportions. Revolutionary, socialist, writer, theoretician—Serge was all that. But above all he was a man. And it is a measure of our defeat, of the profound degeneration and descent of our times that we feel his loss with such peculiar violence. Where among our contemporaries are men of the stamp of Victor Serge? Would that we could say with confidence that the generation that is to follow him will be equal to this heritage.

CORRECTIONS

An error was made in numbering the pages of the previous issue of *Modern Review* (December 1947 issue). The paging should have begun with 720 which would have made the last page of the issue 800 instead of 788.

In the article by Erich Franzen in the article entitled "On the Image of America in European Literature" (November 1947 issue of *Modern Review*) the sentence on page 663 reading: "To the adherents of Thomas Paine and William Pitt . . .", etc., the word "adherents" should be stricken out and the word "opponents" substituted.

SOCIALISM AND MARXIST IDEOLOGY

Ignazio Silone

In the beginning, the term "Marxism" referred to a certain *method* for the analysis of social phenomena. Soon enough, however, the meaningful conclusions arrived at by the use of this method were turned to dogmas; for many lazy minds, they became a full-bodied *ideology*. From a method to an ideology—the decay of Marxism is comprised within these two terms.

The term "ideology" was presumably coined by Destutt de Tracy, who designated by it the world of ideas. In the writings of Karl Max the term is invariably used in a derogatory sense. It is a fact that the word "ideology" never had a good press. To define Marxism as "the ideology of the proletariat" is therefore an unhappy, if widespread, habit; and such popular expressions as "the socialist ideology" (or "the communist ideology," "the democratic ideology," etc.), are indeed dubious; they may be legitimately used only to name an abstract, or empty, way of thinking. In other words, an "ideologue" is a man whose head is the clouds: one of those "souls" of which Dante says that "they feed on wind."

Are we then to believe that the term "ideology" should never be applied to that body of historical, sociological and political ideas of which the spiritual wealth of Socialism, or Communism, or democracy consists? Certainly not. On the contrary, the political battlefield of the Left is still encumbered with ideological balloons, more than often useless, if not directly harmful, in the day-by-day struggle. Quite a number of notions which are a legacy from the 19th century, and which once seemed to be eternal truths, are now platitudes; moreover, in the light of scientific progress, some of them have become gross dogmas.

If the uneasiness in question troubles democratic Socialism less than similar political currents it is because democratic Socialists have a greater respect for freedom of thought. To exemplify: a member of the British Labor Party, or a Socialist Party in Scandinavia (and the

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IGNAZIO SILONE is one of Italy's most widely-known modern writers, author of *Fontamara, Bread and Wine,* and *Seeds Beneath the Snow.* He edits *Europa Socialista,* a socialist weekly published in Rome.

same is true of the Swiss, and now even of the French, Socialist Party) is only asked to approve of Socialism as an ultimate goal and to accept the programs periodically agreed upon at the Party conventions; he is *not* required to affirm his faith in any specific philosophical doctrine, and particularly not to profess atheism. To be more specific: in the Socialist parties I have mentioned, Marxists work side by side with religious Socialists of various Christian denominations or of Jewish faith, as well as with positivists, pragmatists, and Kantians, while the rank-and-file, as everywhere, are indifferent to whatever goes beyond immediate economic and political problems.

Not many words are needed to show the benefit of freeing Socialism from Marxist orthodoxy. To say, however, that the Party is agnostic in philosophical and religious matters does not imply in the least that its membership *should* be eclectic. In other words: in those fortunate, civilized countries, Marxist, Christian or Kantian Socialists are not at all compelled to be Marxists, or Christians, or lukewarm or impure Kantians; they are only asked to be tolerant of comrades of different philosophical or religious persuasion. Tolerance, indeed, is so natural a thing (in those fortunate, civilized countries) that it is not even required. The unity of the Party, its homogeneity and firmness rest upon, and express themselves in, a common political will.

It is worthwhile to state that the ideological open-mindedness of the Socialist parties in question has never endangered their organizational unity. The opposite is more true: freedom of opinion makes unity possible. "Fractions" may be created, or political dissensions arise, but never because of an incompatibility between christened and circumsized adherents, or between materialists and idealists; they arise because what a truly Socialist policy should be (in a given situation) is open to question. It may be added that confessional, or rigidly Marxist parties are in no way exempt from internal feuds and "fractionist" struggles.

In the Latin countries and in Central Europe, Socialism was compelled in the past (for well-known historical reasons) to take over from the radical democrats the struggle against the clergy and against religion; the attack there had to be founded upon a rigid ideological basis. There are many signs, however, that a happy turn toward freedom of faith and thought is taking place in those countries too. A definite change is making its dark, hidden way, silently, as always in these matters where instinct plays a greater role than intelligence. Socialists of Latin countries, for example, are no longer forbidden by the Party to attend religious ceremonies. In many regions of Italy,

especially in the countryside, there are Socialists who go to mass on Sundays—without, presumably, making churches crumble or Socialist headquarters collapse. And yet, not too long ago a Socialist who would allow his daughter to be confirmed religiously was considered a scandalous fellow, liable to expulsion from the Party. There were Socialist district-branches (or so the rumor goes) where it was believed that to organize a banquet where meat would be liberally served, on a Good Friday, was an excellent way to refute clerical bigotry. It is a symptom of actual progress that such infantile forms of protest are becoming obsolete.

Marxist ideology is now in sharp decline. A controversy on the interpretation of Marxism—such as the one that raged between Lafargue, Jaurès, Sorel, Bernstein, Kautsky, Max Adler and Otto Bauer—would be inconceivable today. Socialism has no need for it (having many other fish to fry). But together with Marxist controversy, anti-Marxist attack has been weakening, too. The opponents of Socialism have understood that it is pointless to refute the dogmas of Marxism, at this late hour. Furthermore, to refute Marxism is one thing, and to refute Socialism is quite another. One point, at least, seems to be evident by now: Socialism, as every other deep historical movement, is justified by itself; and while it may rely, at a particular time, on this, or that, theory and ideology, it is never really dependent on any of them. In the modern age, we have seen Science change its views every fifty years, or so. But the historical span that Socialism will encompass may prove immensely longer. It may well be that what we see now is but the beginning of a parabola which will spread over thousands of years.

Utopia and Science will always fight over the soul of Socialism. But Science changes every fifty, or thirty, years; whereas Utopia can survive millennia—because it is one with man's longing.

A party relying on a "scientific" ideology is in bad trouble when, after a few decades, its formulas become obsolete. Should a party, then, incessantly adjust its ideology to the progress of science? But how? A party, after all, is not a scientific society.

If parties cannot be "the courts of the Truth," they should at least avoid the guardianship of sepulchers. The only service they can render to science is to grant it freedom—that is, actual opportunities of disinterested research.

As to the rest, it is known that a single movement may dress itself, in the course of its historical life, in the garb of various philosophies

and "sciences." Christianity had not only the Aristotelian theology of its schoolmen, it also had a Platonic theology, and has now a dialectical theology. In the history of Socialism, Marxism will remain as the ideology of Socialism in a certain age—probably as its most specific ideology.

In its wider and more permanent meaning, Socialism is the poor people's aspiration to social justice and equality, to be achieved by suppressing economic and political privilege. This is all; there is nothing more to it.

In the labyrinth of ideological "isms," this powerful inner core of Socialism may occasionally get lost, or weakened, or infected with spurious and alien elements. This is why, now and then, we have to make a new beginning, by first taking an up-to-date inventory of the data of the social question.

The most constant factor in the history of Socialism is not this, or that, theory—it is the presence of the proletariat. The fact is more than evident, and yet many people are still unwilling to admit it. In the meanwhile, ideological prejudice is playing havoc in the present phase of the political struggle. Simply to disentangle (in order to define) the problems at hand is a most painful undertaking. And only the word "torment" can describe the predicament of whomever tries to promote an active agreement between various groups, even when all of them have already recognized the necessity of a specific step.

Ideological parties are, in their own way, "confessional," too. And they are intolerant of political Catholicism not always out of love for freedom, but often because of a dogmatic and "clerical" rivalry. As long as ideological parties exist, no government will be truly secularist and modern.

If the present state of affairs should continue, the problems of human welfare will be reduced to a pointless, and endless, chatter, while we shall be waiting for violence to solve them. Chatter makes violence inevitable.

To conclude: we should separate, once and for all, the question of the bank-system from the discussion of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

PLIGHT OF HIGHER LEARNING

A "Course in Smells," said to be the latest thing in adult training, is being offered at the New York University Division of General Education to persons in the aromatics and perfumery trades, it was announced yesterday.—*New York Times.*

AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS — 1848–1948

F. A. Ridley

I. The "Communist Manifesto" in Human History

The year 1848, the year of the Bourgeois "World Revolution," may be accurately regarded as the year One of the Socialist Era in world history. And it was so in two respects; observing here that classical "unity of the theory and practice" which Marxist philosophy was presently to identify with the maturity of human culture in the socialist age.

For the year 1848 saw in Paris, the then revolutionary capital of Europe, and elsewhere, the first mass-movement of the new revolutionary class, the proletariat, the class of factory workers and technicians to which the Industrial Revolution of the previous century had given birth; and, simultaneously, the birth of a new theory of History and of Society which, as is the wont of ideologies of genius, summed up the fundamental trends of the dawning era, thus acting as a signpost to the Future.

This theoretical "prolegomenon to every future social theory" (to paraphrase Immanuel Kant) was represented by the *Communist Manifesto,* written by the German exiles, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, at the behest of the Communist League, and published in London at the end of February 1848—almost exactly coincident with the revolution of the Paris workers (February 21-22) which sent the bourgeois régime of King Louis-Philippe into the limbo of forgotten things.

Thus the revolutionary practice of the dawning Socialist age, expressed in the positive political action of the working masses, kept parallel pace with the new theoretical analysis of the revolutionary era that was, just then, dawning. "The Unity of Theory and Practice" which was to be the essential hall-mark of the new age, was thus happily disclosed at the very beginning of that age!

For the essential historical methodology of the *Communist Mani-*

F. A. RIDLEY is an English labor and socialist journalist, political editor of the British *Socialist Leader* and editor of *Left.* He is a member of the National Council of the Independent Labor Party and of the Committee for Study and Action for "The United Socialist States of Europe." He characterizes the theme of this article as "an anti-Communist, anti-Social Democrat defense of Marxism."

festo was that it did away, once and for all, with the age-long cleavage between the Utopian aspirations of the masses and their practical inefficiency and, too often, irrelevance in relations to the concrete possibilities of their contemporary epoch.

With the publication of the *Manifesto* that "New Testament" (to employ a convenient religious metaphor) of social science, there ended the long socially "prehistoric" age, throughout which human ethics were little more than a deceptive mirage pointing mankind towards an upward goal for the effective attainment of which it lacked the material tools.

With the positive entry of the working-class, the political heirs of the French Revolution and the economic heirs of the Industrial Revolution, upon the political scene, a new era in human society and in human social consciousness dawned. It was the gifted authors of the *Manifesto,* alone among the European thinkers of their age, who, as is the wont of genius of the highest order, first discerned the real nature and unique possibilities of that age. Since 1848, and ever more clearly as the years roll by, it becomes obvious that the decisive turning-point in the entire history of man since he became man, was the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.

As a result of the epoch-making transformation effected in and by that era, Humanity, for the very first time in its long and painful history compounded principally of "blood, sweat, and tears," has acquired the indispensable "tools for the job": "the job" being, in this case, nothing else than the attainment of the world-wide co-operative commonwealth: of a world fit—no longer merely for human beasts of prey, suitably disguised—for "Homo Rapiens"!—but for a really *human* Humanity; for a *real* "Homo *Sapiens*" to live in.

The first and the most important characteristic of the *Manifesto* was that it revealed to mankind both the nature of the task before it in the new machine age, and, equally, the nature of the tools with which this age endowed it. In 1848, as still today, mankind stood at the juncture of two enormous epochs: of the agrarian "prehistoric" age of the social immaturity of the past, and of the machine age of social maturity in the future.

It was the supreme glory of the *Communist Manifesto* that it said the *first* word about this fundamental transition. *A great deal of nonsense would have been spared long-suffering Humanity, and, incidentally, a great deal of ink and paper would have been saved for more useful ends, had the critics of the* Manifesto *realized that it deals, throughout, exclusively with* first, *and not with* last *words.*

For, in the history of Philosophy, the Manifesto *represents the essential introduction to Marxism, and in Marxism there are no "last words," any more than there are "final causes." Indeed, in this connection, one could accurately venture the paradox that "the last word" of Marxism is that there are no last words! Everything is transitory, temporary, and essentially conditioned by an historic process, which is always dynamic, never static and, accordingly never permanent. In February,* 1848, *with the publication of the* Communist Manifesto *the idea of Relativity entered upon the formerly metaphysical scene, and in particular, took charge of the Philosophy of History department in human thought!*

II. "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific"

In his famous introduction to his great polemic against Duhring, written a generation after he, together with Marx, had launched the *Manifesto,* Engels contrasted its "scientific socialism" with the "Utopian" socialist systems that had preceded it. And, indeed, it would be historically correct to go a good deal further than Engels went in his actual account of Utopian Socialism. For the theories of the English, French and German socialist pioneers, such as Owen, St. Simon, Fourier, Cabet, etc., to whom Engels rather gratuitously limited the term "Utopian," themselves merely represented the latest chapter, one might say the final and culminating phase of social "Utopianism" which stretches back almost to the dawn of recorded history; and included "The Sun State" of the Greek Iambulus (3rd century B.C.), the revolutionary Kings of Sparta, the great Spartacus, the "Lenin" of Antiquity, and a hundred medieval sects, from the Lollards and Hussites to the Anabaptists and Levellers of the era of the Reformation.

For all these European classical and medieval movements, not to mention their Chinese and Mohammedan counterparts, belong to the great Utopian tradition of permanent ethical protest and of frequent political revolt against the also permanent horrors of a class-divided society and of the class-state, which runs like a red thread of revolt against the things that were, from the earliest revolts of the Egyptian serfs (whose equalitarian aspirations are recorded in a contemporary Egyptian papyrus recently discovered), down to the final exodus of Etienne Cabet and his French "Icarians." For Cabet and his Utopian pilgrims set out to found their Utopian "New Jerusalem," their 19th century Communist "City of the Sun" in the wilds of Texas, during the very days that Marx and Engels, early in 1848, were actually writing the *Communist Manifesto.*

The "Utopists" of the early 19th century to whom Engels specifically referred represented, I repeat, merely the final phase of this immemorial tradition of Utopian communism: a tradition politically concluded by the rise of the modern "proletariat" which made its first active political appearance as a class upon the barricades of Paris in February-June, 1848. And which was theoretically annihilated during those self-same memorable weeks by the new social analysis; an analysis, unlike that of the Utopians, based upon Science and History, and no longer upon more mystical reveries and impossible ethical "wish-fulfilments," as were all the great Utopists from (to speak only of the modern Europeans) More and Campanella, to Owen and St. Simon.

What were the basic and unchanged characteristics, from Iambulus' "Sun State" to Cabet's "Icarian" commonwealth, which characterized the long age of Utopian Socialism over 2,000 and more years?

Briefly, Utopian Socialism represented mankind's ethical protest against his own social immaturity. It was, simultaneously, its moral glory and its practical impotence. It could see and it could condemn—all honor to it!—the horrors of the slave-serf-exploitive state which is, at all times and places, and under whatever hypocritical disguises, the State of Private Property, of classes, and of human exploitation as between rich and poor. In brief, the society and state of "civilization," as invariably hitherto known.

Against that age-long horror, Utopian, pre-Marxist Communism raised its voice across the ages from the social underworld to which the political power of the class-state confined it: it is, I repeat, its undying glory! *Utopian Communism represented the age-old conscience of mankind.* But its voice remained unheard, its conscience was ineffective; in vain, it dashed itself with often enough tragic heroism against the iron limitations imposed upon mankind by a social immaturity that was stronger by far than any ruling-class or any class-state. It was, in fact, the social immaturity of their pre-industrial ages that doomed alike the classical slaves of Spartacus and the medieval Anabaptist serfs of Münster.

For where, as always prior to the Industrial Revolution and the Machine Age to which it led, the economic basis of a tolerable human life was lacking, no tolerable human life could exist for the broad masses. And no amount of ethics and-or "wish-fulfilments" could alter this grim reality. All that revolting slaves, serfs, and Messianic sectaries could do during the long age that stretched from the writing of the *Apocalypse*—that *Communist Manifesto* of the Utopian age!—down to 1848, was to dream longingly of Divine Intervention, of "Saviors

from on high," or else to wreak imaginative vengeance upon their human oppressors in some remote spiritual universe where class-justice no longer bore sway and moral values could be vindicated, not here, but in a compensatory Beyond.

(It was, in fact, precisely because the *New Testament Apocalypse* featured the most brilliant vicarious vengeance on its contemporary Roman class-state, that it became the veritable "revolutionaries' handbook" of a hundred Utopian insurrections, from the (4th century) African Donatists to the "Fifth Monarchy" zealots of the English 17th century Revolution.)

The *Communist Manifesto* did away with all this; with hypothetical "Saviors from on high," and with Messianic dreams. In place of a future society based upon heavenly intervention, it sketched one based upon contemporary human development. *It introduced the idea of evolution into sociology. It "translated" the socialist commonwealth from the realm of visions into the realm of facts.* In a word, it transformed socialism from an ethical aspiration into an historic proximate probability and an eventual certainty.

Human society, so runs the central theme of the *Manifesto,* is an autonomous entity which finds its motivating power within itself. It is, at all times and places, bound to its material basis, and it is the relationship of society to that basis which necessarily determines the entire historic process. *Mankind is a "natural" product of this world; not a celestial visitor to it, as the older religious and idealistic philosophies had taught. As such, it must exist before it can speculate*: the *Manifesto* takes up and elaborates that materialistic idea already present in germ in medieval thought, though then effectively restrained by the power of the Church: *Primum vivere, deinde philosophare* ("first keep alive and then philosophize").

It is the social struggle to "keep alive" waged first against an undifferentiated nature, and then against a nature increasingly modified and controlled by mankind, that constitutes the historic process. The lack of surplus wealth due to primitive production, and not any moral superiority, created "primitive communism." A limited surplus, insufficient for the whole of society, due to a more advanced but still incomplete mastery of nature, created the class-struggle, which culminates in Capitalism. The complete mastery of nature, already foreshadowed in 1848, and since then vastly extended in the intervening century, creates, as it were, a social umbrella sufficient for the whole of Humanity, and therewith, does away with the clash of classes for a surplus only

partial in character, and only to be obtained by exploitation of the weaker by the stronger, which has been, and is, for that matter, still today the fundamental dynamic of the historic process.

With the publication of the *Communist Manifesto,* as Engels, its co-author, later phrased it, mankind made a gigantic intellectual leap "from Utopia to Science." *Therewith, sociology descended from heaven and took up its abode among men.* Just as the Industrial Revolution itself is the fundamental watershed that really separates the "prehistory" of social immaturity from the "historic" era of human maturity, which Marx and Engels, like Moses on Mount Pisgah, glimpsed from afar; so the publication of the *Manifesto* similarly marked the decisive transition from Utopian mythology to social science. And nothing, absolutely nothing, can ever deprive the *Manifesto* of that glory; one shared only by a handful of historic documents. Come what may, the *Manifesto* will always remain the greatest pioneering document in the social history of evolving Humanity.

III. After a Hundred Years!

A century has now elapsed since the Communist League of German exiles launched its epoch-making *Manifesto.* How stands it today? What, in 1948, in the historic relevance of the *Manifesto.*

In general, we may say that it has accomplished its work in the realm of theory. Today, no one except mystics outside of time, and mental troglodytes far behind the time, attempt to go back on the profound intellectual revolution that was effected in 1848. The primacy of the economic and the relativity of the "socially-necessary" productive forces in their relationship to human evolution; the age-long battle of the classes for the domination of the social surplus, and the conditioned role of the political State as the determining factor in this struggle for existence: all these basic tenets the *Communist Manifesto,* so shocking both to conservative and to Utopian socialist thought in 1848, now form part of the normal and indispensable world of thought in 1948. "We are (in the above sense) all Marxists nowadays!"

Just as no one today, who values his intellectual credit, dare deny Darwin's main evolutionary thesis (so shocking in 1859 when the *Origin of Species* first saw the light) so that even his critics are reduced to incidental criticism of detail, so the same is true of the masterpiece of Marx and Engels! Did the authors fail to anticipate Freud's also epoch-making doctrine of the "subconscious"? (How much they would have benefitted had they foreseen it!) The anthro-

pology of the *Manifesto* was that of—1848? (How surprising! What else could it have been—in 1848?)

All such criticisms, and they abound, are easily and completely met by again reminding the critics that the *Manifesto* is a *first* and not a *last* word; *and that, in any case, final categories, like "final causes," constitute a flat denial of Marxism!*

No doubt if they could return to us now in 1948, the authors would reply to their critics that it never entered their heads to claim infallibility. (Engels, that most modest of men, repeatedly disclaimed it.) On the contrary! It was their intellectual mission to do away with it! For Marx, the "Darwin" of Sociology, the pioneer of evolution, was, not less emphatically, the "Einstein" of the Philosophy of History: *the arch-apostle of historical relativity. To accuse the* Manifesto *of not being infallible, is to pay a sincere tribute to its scientific methodology: it is, in fact, to proclaim oneself a good Marxist!*

Accordingly, we conclude that as a purely theoretical work the historic pamphlet has done its work. It has vindicated its claim to be regarded as the *New Testament* of social science. The fact that the typical conservative reactions of our day: Fascism in Germany and Italy; clericalism in (pre-war) Austria and Spain do not attempt to "refute" the master-work of Marx and Engels, but simply suppress it, constitutes the very best proof of its overwhelming intellectual victory. In the world of the intellect, we may paraphrase La Rochefoucald and affirm *that suppression is the most sincere homage that falsehood can pay to truth.* As Engels himself was never tired of reminding his readers, in human history as in the culinary art, "the proof of the pudding lies in the eating"!

We conclude, that for the purpose of the age in which it was written (the limitation is a Marxist one and should be constantly remembered), the *Manifesto* remains the master-work, the key document: that is, for the age of human transition in which we ourselves are living: of transition from social immaturity to maturity: from classes and the class-state to the "classless" society: from the national state to the world-commonwealth: from capitalism to communism: from "prehistory" to history.

No doubt, human evolution will not stop there, any more than it has stood still in its tracks in earlier ages: the motto is still "Forward, ever Upward"! And, no doubt, new ages, with new problems will produce new constellations in the intellectual firmament. Let posterity solve its own problems! It would be the crassest denial of Marxism were

we to deny that it will. But for our own age, the *Manifesto* of 1848 still remains the key to our era, its operative word!

The *Communist Manifesto,* however, was never intended to be regarded as a purely theoretical work. This wonderful critico-analytical document itself represented, I repeat, that "unity of theory and practice" which it preached. It was the political prognosis of the coming "World Revolution," of History in the making, no less than an inspired "outline" of past history. And as a political "manifesto" how stand its teachings today in the year 100 of the Marxist era? For come what may, our age is that. It is the spirit of Marx that, pre-eminently, hovers over our essentially revolutionary era.

In general, it must be affirmed that, as a practical guide to revolutionary action during the intervening century, the *Manifesto* has been much less successful than in the realm of pure theory. *And it was so because, paradoxically enough, it was much less "Marxist"! For Marx and Engels were scientists in theory, but, too often, degenerated into mere political optimists in practice.*

In no respect, if we are to affirm Marxist principles, was the world, or even the Europe of 1848, still semi-feudal and three-quarters illiterate, ready for a genuine Marxist revolution "of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority." Even today, over half the world, the essential prerequisites of such a revolution: mass-production, political democracy, scientific culture, are lacking. And how much more so in 1848! One cannot but conclude that, in apparently anticipating a *socialist* revolution against the concrete background of 1848, our authors effectively substituted over-optimistic "wish-fulfilments" for Marxist science.

Similarly, it has been the historic misfortune of Marxism that its supreme political conception of "the immense majority" consciously seizing power in order to transform society in its own interests, has never yet been realized on the actual historic terrain.

Of the two major political schools that profess to carry on the Marxist tradition in our contemporary world, *Social Democracy has dropped entirely the indispensable revolutionary side of Marxism, while Communism has abandoned the equally necessary democratic aspect. Social Democracy, that is, is democratic but is the reverse of revolutionary: while Communism (Russian style) is revolutionary but not democratic.*

Social Democracy, in practice, identifies itself with the capitalist system which it sets out gradually to transform. While Communism substitutes the dictatorship of a minority of the proletariat over society

(and over the proletariat!) for the genuine Marxist "dictatorship of the proletariat," which, as used by Marx and Engels themselves, is merely the synonym for political democracy; for the rule of the "immense majority."

True political Marxism is neither Communist nor Social Democratic. It is revolutionary and *democratic, and it is only in such an, as yet uncreated movement that the* Manifesto *will find adequate political, as it has already found adequate theoretical expression.*

We conclude by affirming that, after one hundred years, the *Communist Manifesto* has, by no means, lost its relevancy for our era. Its scientific analysis remains of the highest value, unsurpassed. It remains a beacon, but, in no sense, as a boundary to human thought in this era of transition to a higher social order. At least, until this higher world-wide classless society is realized, it is no more than the simple truth to affirm that our age still remains essentially the age of the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848.

SUN GOD

Josef Vissarionovich Stalin, in a letter said to have been signed by 26,474,646 Soviet youths, was hailed today as "the sun of the entire earth."—*N. Y. Herald-Tribune.*

TRIALS OF A LABOR GOVERNMENT

Sir Waldron Smithers: On a point of Order. Before we get on with the further Business for to-day, Mr. Speaker, may I call your attention to the fact that the B.B.C. this morning omitted to commence their broadcast programmes by playing the National Anthem on the occasion of the birthday of Her Majesty the Queen? Will you, Sir, as the First Commoner, summon the directors of the B.B.C. to the Bar of this House as traitors to their King and Country?—*Hansard.*

HEAVY-THINKER DEPT.

There's a women's revolution brewing. This fact was sharply driven home to me when I was in Connecticut the first week of October, the day after local elections had swept Democrats into power in many towns.—Henry Wallace in the *New Republic.*

BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!

It is an illusion that the bloc of left-wing CIO votes, wielded by any one of the Messrs. Guinier, Quill, or Potash, is the mailed fist that can be sent smashing into the forehead of Mayor William O'Dwyer.—*New Leader.*

SOCIALISM'S IMPACT UPON AMERICA

Norman Thomas

One hundred years of modern Socialism following the issuing of the *Communist Manifesto* has not brought the United States of America, mightiest of industrial nations, into the Socialist fold. On the contrary, "free enterprise," a misleading alias for private capitalism, is the popular fetish of the moment. In the last presidential campaign, 1944, Earl Browder, Communist candidate for the presidency, became temporarily the leader of a singular chorus of Democrats, Republicans, Communists, Wall Street monopolists, heads of great unions, and the manipulators of the Farm Bloc, in praise of a "free enterprise" in which none of them really believed or sought truly to practice. American economy had moved very far from the *laissez faire* theories of early capitalism. Private monopolies and oligopolies dominate the economic scene. Depression and war have enormously enlarged the areas of state intervention. The masses instinctively look for protection not to the operation of old-fashioned competition, but to the power of great unions and other blocs which can put pressure upon corporations, and most of all upon the political state. It is a fair assumption that Adam Smith would be at least as amazed as Karl Marx by the American economy, as well as by the fact that not only the Socialist Party, but any conscious Socialist movement in the United States is weak.

I include in the above statement the Communist Party. Despite its socialist origin, it has universally degenerated into a Red fascism. By various means it has achieved considerable influence in America. I shall not discuss it here as part of true Socialism, but merely wish to point out that its strength is not enough to nullify my acknowledgment that Socialism, however broadly it may be defined, is weak in America.

That this is true is baffling and disappointing to European Socialists of all shades of opinion. It is surprising to most thoughtful Americans. But it is a source of complacent satisfaction to groups as diverse as the National Association of Manufacturers, the New Deal "Liberals," and most of the heads of our unions, A. F. of L. and C. I. O. alike.

NORMAN THOMAS is the veteran leader of the Socialist Party of the United States and chairman of the Postwar World Council. His latest book, *Appeal to the Nations,* deals with the problem of preventing a third World War.

There is, however, reason to think that this satisfaction among the workers is nominal and tactical, and might easily be sloughed off if William James' "bitch goddess," Success, would smile on an organized Socialist movement.

It is generally admitted, even by the sharpest critics of Socialism, that its influence in America is far greater than its direct power. The fear of Socialism that those critics so commonly express is in itself proof of that fact. The observer who would write off Socialism in American life would have to explain away such facts as these:

Every considerable reform, political and economic, adopted by Democrats and Republicans in the national and state governments, since the end of the nineteenth century, was first an immediate demand in Socialist platforms.

All important social legislation, including that of the New Deal, was adopted when the Socialist Party looked as if it might be at least a considerable threat to the old parties. After 1936 when labor unreservedly threw its support to Roosevelt there was an end of social legislation. The most that labor won by its tactics was defense of what had been gained and a considerable measure of friendship in administrative procedure.

To a very great extent Socialists furnished the impetus and the leadership of the progressive wing of American labor. The needle trades, pioneers of progressive unionism, were long frankly Socialist in leadership and direction. Back in 1924 when a large section of the American labor movement joined with Socialists in support of the elder La Follette for President, Morris Hillquit expressed to me his amazement at the number of labor leaders who confided to him that Socialism was their early inspiration. I have made somewhat similar discoveries and would boast about them except that a few of those who have told me of their Socialist beginnings have developed a conservative, not to say reactionary attitude which does no honor to their past. It is, however, significant that many labor leaders, protesting their loyalty to "free enterprise," have nevertheless espoused measures Socialist in origin, sometimes as a direct result of American Socialist propaganda, sometimes in imitation of the Socialist needle trades, and sometimes under the influence of European examples very definitely Socialist in origin.

He who would dismiss the impact of Socialism on American life as negligible would be hard put to it to explain the history of the needle trades. It should give him pause to try to explain where the

labor movement or American progress would have been without the towering figure of Eugene V. Debs, beloved by many thousands who for one reason or another never got around to voting for him even when his political strength was greatest.

I am aware that there is a sound and healthy tendency to explore American history and to reassert the value of an indigenous radicalism going far back into colonial times. It is, of course, true that Gene Debs was a great labor leader before he became a Socialist, and that his Socialism always had something of the tang and color of the older American radicalism. Nevertheless, I think that Gene Debs, had he not turned to Socialism after the defeat of the great railway strike, would have disappeared from the American scene, perhaps after a brief adventure in an unphilosophical radicalism, perhaps in embittered futility. Possibly without Socialism he would have followed William Jennings Bryan back to "respectability."

Native American radicalism untouched by Socialism had its good points and its bad, its heroes and its crack-pots. Too often the people who followed for a while the banners of various movements calling themselves Greenback, Populist or Progressive did not free themselves from a very narrow nationalism. Some of them were easily seduced by such forms of native fascism as the Ku Klux Klan. Against this sort of thing Socialism in America has been a powerful antidote.

The course of American history has been predominantly shaped, as any Socialist would expect, by the development of economic forces inherent in capitalism itself and its American setting, but he would be a bold man who would confidently affirm that without Socialism the American labor movement would have its present strength or that there would be so much social and labor legislation upon our statute books. Even if it should be argued that much of this social legislation was influenced by European example, it must be remembered that Socialist influence on legislation in Europe was direct and powerful.

Any estimate of Socialist influence in this country must take account of its zeal for international fraternity and for peace. Democratic socialism in America, like democratic socialism throughout the world, suffered a very serious blow when it failed to prevent the First World War or to bring about a reasonable and enlightened peace settlement. Nevertheless, democratic socialism has been a counter force of enormous importance to the growth of chauvinistic nationalism. American Socialists were preaching and practicing a brotherhood of workers of all national origins long before that became a "liberal" issue. Equally were they pioneers in respect to race relations and fraternity between

white and colored Americans. If this Socialist leaven had been removed from the lump, who can say what our history might have been?

My first concern, then, is to argue that Socialism has been and is a far greater force in America than its superficial critics will allow. I make this point without any complacent satisfaction in the Socialist record. Over and over again I have had reason vehemently to repudiate the smug but oft-repeated argument that "you can always trust the old parties to appropriate whatever is good in a Socialist platform, as they have in the past." Over and over again I have told audiences that if you want a child well brought up it is better to leave him with his family than to have him kidnapped by some rich but indifferent uncle. The fate of our Socialist brain children bears out my example.

One of my vivid recollections of a Democratic campaign speech goes back to the city of Brooklyn about the year 1930. I was on my way to a Socialist meeting when I passed a Democratic out-door rally. The speaker, a local politician of some standing, was shouting: "Now, folks, you know I always told you this here old-age assistance was Socialist. But it ain't anymore. The New York Democrats have adopted it." They did not do too well with their adopted child and they never adopted more important parts of our Socialist program.

Once we have asserted the importance of the Socialist contribution to American life, the second question becomes insistent: Why in the leading capitalist nation of the world has the Socialist movement been so weak? The conventional answer of old party politicians and spokesmen for the NAM is that the American system has been so good, that it has so nearly conquered poverty, that in this blessed land there obviously is no real class conflict.

That answer is, of course, profoundly incorrect. The striking thing about our American life is that in proportion to our opportunities, resources and technological progress, we have done so badly in the conquest of poverty. In a land which has not felt the horrors of any sort of invasion, and which has proved its enormous productive capacity in war, it is still true that by any proper standards one-third of our people are ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed. Even more than most European nations the United States has been the victim of a boom-bust economy of periodic depression which in the '30s was becoming chronic. The New Deal was fairly successful in subsidizing the unemployed, but emphatically it was Dr. Win-the-War and not Dr. New Deal who turned widespread unemployment into a manpower shortage.

It is true, as I shall later explain, that the social relations of economic classes in America is different than in Europe, but to say that

there is no class conflict in America is to ignore the peculiar violence of great strikes which have marked American history and which have exemplified on both sides a high degree of class solidarity. American economic development is, I think, one of the factors which requires a re-examination of Marxism and makes it imperative that we do for our own times something of that which was done for our ancestors by the *Communist Manifesto*. That great document is no infallible bible for our times. But the explanation of the relative weakness of American Socialism is not a refutation of the major doctrines of democratic socialism. There are certain explanations of our weakness which are in order. They fall under three headings: economic, sociological and political.

The outstanding economic fact about American life is not that we have conquered poverty, but that under American conditions, given our relative freedom from feudalistic standards, healthy, ambitious and reasonably lucky young men of the farming and working classes have had a better chance to rise out of their class than to rise with it. It is the restless minority which always takes the initiative in social and economic change. Europe was a settled country without an undeveloped hinterland—a country in which the aristocratic and feudal traditions were carried over into capitalism so that it was very hard for the sons of workers to get the education which they needed for the professions, including engineering, or to rise into the managerial class. By comparison the road was far easier in America. Of course there were many failures in America to rise out of one's class, but by the time the ambitious man had sensed that failure he was often too old and discouraged to become an active leader in a radical or labor movement. This situation is changing, but the relative success of American capitalism in taking over strong and ambitious workers made Gene Debs' insistence that he would rise *with* his class a significant social phenomenon.

Another economic factor in America which has been adverse to conventional socialism was the development of mass production which required mass consumption to keep it going at all. Hence the more enlightened American capitalists have had some incentive to do what Henry Ford once did dramatically; that is, to raise wages well above a subsistence level in order to provide markets for their goods. The corresponding incentive in Europe was much weaker because the development of mass production was much slower.

Closely connected with these economic facts is the sociological situation in America. This country, even more than Europe, has wit-

nessed the rise of a sociological middle class, not truly self-employed, yet not sympathetic to wage workers. Capitalism, thanks to technological progress, far more productive than any 19th century economist could dream, was able to pay satisfactory wages to a managerial class and to highly skilled specialists. Members of the working class, observing that class lines were far less rigid than in Europe, and witnessing the rise of some of their ambitious sons, were often inclined to think of themselves and their families—except during bitter strikes—as members of the general community rather than of the working class, the fathers of lawyers and dentists and managers rather than mine and factory workers.

The third factor which has checked the growth of a Socialist movement or party was and is political. Not only our framework of government but our rules concerning political parties make it extremely difficult for a new party. We do not have a parliamentary government in the European sense but a presidential one. In parliamentary democracies it was only necessary for Socialist or Labor parties to elect a few representatives and make a good record. Their representation could rapidly snowball. In the United States every four years the election of Congress is subordinate to the election of the president. Congressional candidates can scarcely get audiences at their own meetings. It is the presidential campaign which counts. Such liberal, radical or progressive blocs as may seem to arise in Congress, are compelled at every presidential election to subordinate their principles and program to the question, "Which of the two major contenders for the presidency will we support?" Popular interest in the presidential campaign boils down into a choice between the major candidates—often frankly recognized as the choice of the lesser evil—because anything else is "throwing away your vote."

If Americans could vote for a president on a preferential ballot in which their second choices would count towards a majority once their first choices were eliminated, the results would be very different. But actually Americans cannot vote directly for a president at all. They vote, state by state, for members of the electoral college and the winning party in each state takes all of the electors. A plurality of one vote in New York state is as good as a million. Men have been elected president with a minority of the popular vote—Benjamin Harrison was the most recent example—and fear of that operates emotionally against any "third party" candidate.

This fear is enhanced by the fact that under the Constitution if no candidate should get a majority of the electoral college, the election

is thrown into the House of Representatives where each state, New York with thirteen million inhabitants and Nevada with a hundred thousand, would be entitled to one vote.

By no means is this the end of political handicaps to the growth of the Socialist Party. The historical situation which gave rise to the Solid South has hindered Socialism. The legal right of each of the forty-eight states to fix its own rules for voting in primaries and elections handicaps every new and minority party. Since 1912 there has been considerable progress, accelerated since 1932, in monopolizing the ballot for the two old parties by imposing all sorts of onerous conditions on the process by which new or minority parties can be put, or allowed to stay on the ballot.

Finally the primary system in each of the forty-eight states has hurt the Socialist Party by encouraging the hope, heretofore illusory, that one of the old parties could be captured, state by state, by the labor or progressive movement.

These political difficulties are not insuperable. In one way or another they could be overcome by a strong mass movement on the political field such as Socialism should have inspired. Nevertheless, these factors are strong enough to explain the interesting fact that men who do not hesitate to admit that they would be Socialists in England —or New Zealand—and active in the Labor Party, are in America only at best "little s" Socialists who insist on trying to work within the old parties. In terms of social results and on the record, their success has been even less than the success of those of us who have "thrown away our votes" on Socialist candidates. We have at least kept alive an idea and a principle. I repeat: it is more than coincidence that there has been no important social legislation enacted since labor went over so unanimously to the Democratic Party under Roosevelt.

This article, I observe, is descending—or ascending?—from an objective analysis of Socialist influence in America to a plea for a strong Socialist movement which will express itself in a great, independent mass party inspired by democratic socialist ideals. I do believe that such a party is a major requirement for progress in the difficult task of winning freedom, peace and plenty in the United States. The point, however, of the present article is, first, to indicate that there has been a genuine and beneficial Socialist influence in America, and then to explain the reasons, all of them significant for reshaping Socialist theory and practice, why that influence has not been greater and more direct. To make democratic socialism more of a power in America is surely a major task in the struggle against war, tyranny and poverty.

PERMANENT CLASS STRUGGLE OR UTOPIA?

Max Nomad

The various theoretical systems advocating what is generally called the "emancipation of the working class" have one thing in common: they assume—for the near or more distant future—the extinction of all social and economic inequalities, with the resulting disappearance of the class conflicts which throughout history have been the accompaniment of these inequalities.

The basic concept of practically all of these theories consists in the assumption that capitalism is the last possible form of exploitation. This assumption has been blasted by the now obvious realities of Russia's totalitarian collectivism; a system under which a new privileged class has taken the place of the dispossessed land-owners and capitalists; a new privileged class, interested in maintaining inequalities of income and education which are just as deep as under the old systems of exploitation.

The emergence of this all-powerful bureaucratic class—office-holders, technical experts and managers, army officers, and so on—has led to a revival of the discussion about the nature of the new middle class consisting of intellectual workers, which in the course of the last three decades has become the top ruling group of the various totalitarian states.

According to the traditional Marxist concept, a man's or a group's class status is determined by the criterion of property and not that of income. Hence, from this point of view, even a $50,000-a-year bank director is a "proletarian," provided he lives on his salary alone and draws no dividends from any investments. For the Marxist sees only property-holding employers and propertyless employees (cf. the famous passage in the *Communist Manifesto* about the "physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science" having been converted into

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MAX NOMAD is the author of *Rebels and Renegades* and *Apostles of Revolution*. He now teaches at New York University and the New School for Social Research.

"paid wage laborers" of the bourgeoisie). The rising new middle class of intellectual workers has no independent status in the Marxist concept of classes.

This view of the founders of Marxism was largely shared by their most outstanding continuator, Karl Kautsky, who dealt with that subject in some of his most important works (*Die Materialistische Geschichtsauffassung,* Vol. II, pp. 490-491, *Anti-Kritik,* pp. 135, 178, 187-188, *Die Soziale Revolution,* Vol. I, pp. 27, 43). He insisted that the "*Intellektuellen* [intellectual workers] are not a class and have no specific class interests." However, he did not consider them merely as "paid wage laborers" of the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, in his *Antikritik* (pp. 187-8) he said that the bourgeoisie is "composed of capitalists and intellectual workers" [he uses the term *Intelligenz*], which by the way does not entirely square with the statement made on p. 135 of the same book where he said that "it would be an exaggeration to claim the *Intelligenz* as a whole for the proletariat, but it would be a still greater mistake to refer to them simply as part of the propertied classes" (sie einfach den Besitzenden zuzurechnen). In his pamphlet *Die Vernichtung der Sozialdemokratie* (p. 16) he says: "The 'new middle class' is more and more splitting into two groups, one of which occupies the higher, better paid, dominating positions and champions the interests of capital, while the other group, which is growing continuously, is making common cause with the proletariat." Kautsky is thus, to a certain extent, coming around to the position of those who see the determinant of a person's class status in his income; he separates the *Intelligenz* into two camps, the high-salaried, bourgeois "ins," and the low-salaried or unemployed "outs," whose place is allegedly with the working class.

There is also another view which—in dealing with this problem—considers both the income and its specific origin or source. The livelihood of the intellectual workers, according to this view—whether they be "ins" or "outs"—is based upon the possession of a higher or at least secondary education. This invisible capital, as it were, enables them to obtain a privileged position either within the capitalist system, or within any other system that would restrict or abolish capitalist monopoly. The elevation to power of the educated déclassés—they are sometimes called the "intellectual proletariat" or, more or less jocularly, "the *lumpen-intelligentsia*"—as a result of the various revolutions of the last three decades, would seem to throw some doubts as to the real identity of the interests of the educated "outs" with those of the working class at large.

II

The example of non-capitalist Russia, where the office-holding class (bureaucracy), embracing practically all the educated elements of the country, is the collective owner of the entire national wealth and the collective exploiter and oppressor of the rest of the population, has suggested to many socialists the idea that it is necessary to introduce a certain number of correctives into the concept of anti-capitalism. Anti-capitalism, or collectivism, they contend, can mean liberty and equality only if it is coupled with democracy (in the meaning of political freedom and a multi-party system), and if the idea of a pluralistic or mixed economy (state, municipal, cooperative and private ownership) is substituted for the concept of complete nationalization, i.e., exclusive government ownership.

The necessity of these correctives is beyond dispute. If introduced, they will no doubt make for a social system that will have great advantages over both democratic capitalism and totalitarian collectivism. But will they do away with classes and class conflicts?

The inauguration of democratic socialism (or of a pluralistic, mixed economy, if you prefer) can be envisioned as a gradual process, occurring either under the impact of legislative measures adopted by a progressive, laborite, or socialist majority, or as a result of the pressure of mass strikes, or both. [I am not considering here the eventuality of a revolutionary overturn, Bolshevik style. For in that case the result would most likely be a totalitarian form of collectivism which is the antithesis of democratic socialism. I am also leaving open the question as to whether the transition from a totalitarian collectivist regime to a democratic form of socialism will be effected as a result of military defeat, of a "palace revolution" involving a struggle for power among various sections of the bureaucratic apparatus, or of mass sabotage of the industrial workers—or of a combination of all of these elements.]

In view of the gradualness of the process of transition from capitalism to democratic socialism, it may be taken for granted that there will be no sudden abolition of the inequality of incomes. The greatest influence under the new system will no doubt be wielded by those strata of the population which are in possession of a higher education and are, therefore, in charge of the political and economic aspects of the country's administration. In other words, by the politicians, the office-holders, the managers, the technicians, the economists. Their political and economic power will quite naturally be translated into incomes that are higher than the average income of the uneducated or less educated

strata, that is, of the manual workers and the lower ranks of the "white collar" employees. Even if the new regime should intend to make higher education accessible to the offspring of all classes of the population, the realization of that idea would be impossible in less than two or three decades. During that period of transition—*and it is the transition period that counts most*—the new state bureaucracy and the non-governmental managing personnel will be able to consolidate their power and to establish themselves firmly as a privileged class, differing from a totalitarian bureaucracy only by the application of civilized democratic methods in the maintenance of the *status quo,* i.e., of its higher incomes. Their class interests will prove stronger than any political principles proclaimed during the preceding period. Sooner or later higher education, the key to all privileged positions, will be made a hereditary monopoly of the families of those intrenched in power, through high tuition fees such as have been introduced in the Soviet Union. The loftiest principles cannot withstand the impact of man's predatory urge to take advantage of his weaker fellow-man. And the man with higher education has over the uneducated the same advantage as the man armed with a machine gun over a group of men armed with pitchforks.

Man is not an equalitarian animal. The man with higher education takes it for granted that he should get a remuneration higher than that received by the manual worker; and among the manual workers there is a similar attitude on the part of the skilled with regard to the unskilled, of the whites toward the colored, and so on. The differences in the salaries of the functionaries of the various labor and radical organizations testify to the fact that unequal remuneration is the unavoidable accompaniment of greater skill, ability and education—even in those circles which on festive occasions are willing to give lip service to the principle of equality.

It is hardly to be assumed that this unequalitarian attitude of man versus man and group versus group will change as a result of the inauguration of a democratic form of a socialist or mixed economy. For at their outset, so to speak, these economic systems will still be faced by the existence of society's division into "knows" and "know-nots," even if the very crass differences between the "haves" and the "have-nots" may have been mitigated. And it would be even more naive to expect the propaganda of humanitarian or "solidaristic" principles to supply a remedy for the *homo homini lupus* nature of group and class relationships.

III

While inequality of incomes will no doubt remain one of the basic features of the coming democratic form of socialism or pluralism, it may be taken for granted that those in the lower income brackets will not passively submit to these inequalities. "Inequality," said Aristotle, "is the cause of all revolutions." To be sure, that revolt against inequality does not necessarily have to assume the form of revolution in its usually accepted sense. It may find its expression in parliamentary struggles, factional rivalries for power within the educated elite supplying the leadership of the dissatisfied workers and white-collar employees. It may also find its expression in strikes—led either by power-hungry demogogues of the Lewis variety or by bona fide labor strategists of the Reuther type—the lower paid workers trying to bring up their standard of living closer to that of the more skilled; and the latter, in turn, aspiring to that of the office-holders and engineers. No matter what arguments may be advanced in defense of the inequalities of income—these inequalities will be resented by the underdog. Any legislative measures aiming at preventing these strikes or at squelching these demands will be looked upon by the under-privileged as attempts to stabilize inequality and will merely lead to bitter illegal struggles endangering the very existence of the democratic setup of the new system. Which means that there is no infallible method of stabilizing democracy —short of the very desirable but unfortunately utopian remedy of equality of incomes.

All of which leads to the conclusion that the democratic socialist or mixed economy to which we aspire as a remedy against the capitalist and totalitarian evils besetting us today, will still be torn by class conflicts. Conflicts which at best may lead to the mitigation of economic inequalities, but are not likely to remove inequality altogether. For inequalities of income will exist as long as there will be inequalities of education, intelligence and energy; inequalities which in every generation will be reflected in the existence of a hierarchy of political, economic and cultural leaders.

Hierarchies of this kind have the tendency of perpetuating their status by passing it on to their own offspring and thus ceasing to be hierarchies of merit. It will be the task of the democratic institutions on the one hand, and of the class struggles of the dissatisfied on the other, to prevent this degeneracy of the natural aristocratic or, let us say, sophocratic, principle of leadership. This process will help to bring forth ever new elites which will or may show more understanding in mitigating the contradictions and resentments resulting from economic

inequality. But it will not be in their nature to remove these contradictions altogether.

Democratic socialism thus appears as the least objectionable form of class rule and economic inequality. For, unfortunatley, there is no road to an equalitarian Utopia.

IV

Some readers will not be slow in discovering in some of the ideas expressed here a restatement, in democratic-socialist pro-labor terms, of Robert Michels' pessimistic concept of the permanence of oligarchic tendencies in human society, and an echo of Pareto's aristocratic thesis of the "circulation of elites." And they will object that such ideas are likely to have a harmful effect upon the enthusiasm of those who struggle for more freedom and for a more equitable distribution of the good things of life. There is more than a grain of truth in this objection, for illusions and myths have their part in the struggle for human progress. However, cold realism has likewise its advantages. It fortifies the mind aganist the morning-after feeling and the ensuing inertia which inevitably follows once the spell of these illusions has been broken.

It is in his protest against such illusions that Eduard Bernstein, half a century ago, launched his famous dictum: "The final aim means nothing—the movement is everything." And it is in the spirit of the same skepticism as to the realizability of the Ideal, and of the same revolt against the *status quo,* that Samuel Gompers coined the slogan: "More, always more." [1]

It was under the impact of these simple words of the founder of the American Federation of Labor that on some previous occasion the present writer summed up his own views as follows:

"The permanent change of masters and the accompanying striving of the masses in the direction of an ever greater *approach* towards equality in the enjoyment of the good things of life form the basic content of the historical process. That process knows of no millennium when full harmony has been achieved once for all eternity. There is no "happy ending," just as there is no "final revolution" that will eliminate all further class struggles. For the working masses every "final victory" proclaimed by their victorious leaders, even if it is a real step forward, can be only another starting point in their struggle for *more and always more."*

[1] Indorsement of this aspect of Bernstein's and Gompers' views does not imply that the present writer identifies himself with their political attitudes as a whole.

MARX' VIEWS ON LABOR RE-EXAMINED

Reinhard Bendix

The Age of Enlightenment was an age of intellectual self-confidence. Philosophers of many persuasions felt sure that they could foresee the future development of mankind. Today, there is little if any of this self-confidence left among social philosophers or social scientists. Both temporally and intellectually Karl Marx stands midway between these extremes of confidence and skepticism concerning the power of human reason. His work is distinguished from the ideas of the Enlightenment in that he did not believe in the "automatic progress" of mankind and because he claimed to have given a *scientific* interpretation of history. Marx differs from the social scientist of today in that he used his scientific analysis of society as a political instrument in the very development which he predicted.

Today that prediction of a hundred years ago can be judged in the light of the social history since the publication of the *Manifesto*. Marx himself rested his case on the accuracy of his forecast. "What I did that was new," he wrote in 1882, "was to prove that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. That this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."

In assessing this prediction today we should bear in mind the many qualifications which Marx himself noted. First among these is the statement, which introduces the *Manifesto*. All history is the history of class struggles, which "each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes." In view of his emphasis on the close link between social theory and propaganda. Marx clearly failed to elaborate this second possibility, although he granted that it might materialize. But his every effort in analysis and action was spent to bring about a reorganization of society. He called on the working class for organized action to achieve this goal and he expected that action to be successful in the end. He did not believe that this success would

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REINHARD BENDIX is an American sociologist on the staff of the Department of Sociology and Social Institutions of the University of California at Berkeley.

be easily attained; but he did believe that it could be predicted.[1] His capacity for appraising the conflicting forces of history somehow did not undermine his confidence in predicting the ultimate reorganization of capitalist society by a revolutionary proletariat. The centenary of the *Manifesto* gives us occasion to inquire into the reasons for Marx' confidence.

II

Human history, according to Marx, is a history of class struggles which grow out of the socio-economic conditions of production. This did not mean, as so many of his followers have thought, that each phase of this history could be accounted for by economic causes. Rather, Marx conceived of history as divided into a number of epochs each of which had its own characteristic organization of production. It was only in the last phase of each of these historical epochs that the economic factors came to have decisive importance.

In Marx' view capitalism was distinguished from all previous history in that it had developed productive forces of such magnitude as to make "freedom from want" a possibility rather than an Utopian dream. But under capitalism the potential of industrial production could not be developed fully and the social relations incident to capitalist production would create misery, both in the material and in the cultural sense.

> The machine (Marx wrote) is endowed with the wonderful power to reduce human labor and to make it more productive: we see how it creates hunger and overwork. The newly unleashed forces of wealth become the sources of deprivation through a strange play of fate. The achievements of art seem to have been attained at the cost of their character. Humanity becomes the master of nature, but man becomes the slave of man. . . . The result of all our inventions and progress seems to be that the material forces are endowed with the life of the mind, while human existence becomes a stupid, material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on one side and modern misery and decay on the other, this antagonism between the forces of production and the social conditions of our epoch are a fact that is at once visible, overwhelming and undeniable.

Marx sought to prove that the economic structure of capitalism necessitated a division of modern society into the two hostile classes of bourgeoisie and proletariat. On the side of the bourgeoisie, he predicted a concentration of the means of production in fewer hands. And he

[1] In assessing that prediction today we disregard the possibility that the future may bring developments wholly at variance with those of the last 100 years.

anticipated for the proletariat that it would eventually contain within itself the large majority of the people. Then, the stage was set for the reorganization of society which Marx worked for and expected.

Many specific theories fill this general framework, such as the theory of the industrial reserve army, of the declining rate of profit, of the economic crises indigenous to capitalism, and so on. But Marx' work also reveals that the simple analysis which the *Manifesto* gave of the class struggle under capitalism was subject to many qualifications. In the light of the history since the *Manifesto* these qualifications appear particularly important. Perhaps this is so because the relations between economic conditions and social thought or action appear to us far more complex than they did one hundred years ago.

Marx predicted that the masses of the population would ultimately join with the proletariat, although he was aware of the many conflicts of interest among workers and of the development of new middle class groups. He saw the separation of skilled and unskilled laborers. In characterizing the *Lumpenproletariat,* especially in his analysis of the *coup d'état* of Napoleon III, Marx foresaw the role which these demoralized groups would play in a reactionary movement. (In fact, the description of these groups in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* reminds one today of the social composition of the early Nazi movement during the Weimar Republic.) And he denounced the English proletariat for being more "bourgeois than the bourgeoisie." He was aware, then, that striking differences existed between the workers of different countries and among the workers of any one country.

In predicting and working for the eventual solidarity of the workers Marx did not overlook the predominance of economic considerations among them. By themselves these economic motives were not an auspicious basis for the historic role of the proletariat because the workers might be deterred from forming the political labor movement whenever their economic demands were granted. Marx believed, nevertheless, that trade unionism would eventually give rise to a political movement, partly as a result of political agitation and partly because of the profound dissatisfaction of the workers with their role as lifeless tools of production. He expected, moreover, that it would become an international political movement, because capitalism would spread throughout the world, recreating everywhere the same conditions of its own destruction.

For these reasons Marx expected that the masses of the people would form the revolutionary proletariat; "the proletariat," says the

Manifesto, "is recruited from all classes of the population." This would take place despite the many conflicting interests within the working class, despite the chance that the *Lumpenproletariat* would become "the bribed tool of reactionary intrigue." It would take place even despite the possible rise in wages which may accompany the development of capitalism and despite the emergence of a large group of salaried employees, who in the end would yet not escape the fate of proletarianization. In the face of these anticipated developments Marx' confidence in a future revolution depended as much on a philosophical view of man as it did on his economic analysis. The Industrial Revolution profoundly impressed him with the paradox that each development of man's productive efforts resulted in human degradation for large masses of the population. It is this human situation of industrial production which was to Marx the ultimate source of revolutionary upheaval. In writing about "this absolute contradition between the technical necessities of modern industry and the social character inherent in its capitalistic form" Marx emphasized the negative side of capitalism

> "which turns every economical progress into a social calamity . . . but . . . modern industry, on the other hand, *through its catastrophies* imposes the necessity of recognizing, as a fundamental law of production, variation of work, consequently fitness of the laborer for varied work, consequently the greatest possible development of his varied aptitudes. It becomes a question of life and death for society to adapt the mode of production to the normal functioning of this law; modern industry, indeed, compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of today, crippled by life long repetition of one and the same operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs, are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers." (*Capital,* Modern Library ed., pp. 533-34.)

If the revolutionary proletariat was to be formed in the course of capitalist development, it would not be because workers are virtuous, maltreated men. It would be because industrial production had deprived them of the most elementary human satisfactions, at the same time that it had increased their personal abilities as well as their productive capacities. Workers will be united by political action, because a common human degradation will make them responsive to its appeal. That appeal, according to Marx, holds out the hope that man's prehistory has come to a close. Until today man has but extended his control over the forces of nature. But it is within his power to plan

his social relations. Indeed, that is the task of socialism, which can be accomplished by the gradual diminution of the division of labor.

Again and again in his description of factory production Marx emphasized that the worker could no longer plan his own work, that all the creative aspects of work were in the hands of managers and engineers and the worker was left to perform purely mechanical operations. A revolution of the workers against this system of production would restore to them a share of the planning of their work. In this sense the detailed division of labor under capitalism will diminish after the revolution. And since that division of labor is an important foundation of the class society, its diminution will gradually abolish class distinctions and will restore to man the creative exercise of his human capacities.

One hundred years after the *Manifesto* we have reason to doubt the necessity of a proletarian revolution, as this was envisaged by the authors of that great historic document.

Marx admitted the existence of conflicting interests within the proletariat, but he expected that they would diminish in importance. Today many observers believe that during the last century they have played an increasing role. Skilled workers have benefited from the rising standard of living which has accompanied the development of capitalism. The relative ease with which workers of the same skill have organized has increased their advantages in collective bargaining; it has also facilitated their monopolistic control over the supply of skilled labor. To the extent that skilled workers have benefited materially, they have developed a stake in the success of the capitalist economy.

The continued growth of industrial enterprises has been accompanied by a growing proportion of semi-skilled and unskilled workers among the gainfully occupied population. But that statistical fact is not by itself evidence for the growing social homogeneity and class consciousness of these workers. The consciousness and action of a social class, as Marx emphasized, do not emerge spontaneously from the relations of production. And with regard to the mass of unskilled workers, the division between the organized and the unorganized, between organized labor in different industries, between industrial and farm laborers,—these and other divisions have shown few signs of diminishing. Moreover, the worker's rising standard of living has been contingent also on the success of the economic system of which they are a part, and on the success of their trade unions in obtaining higher wages and improved working conditions. But that very success of union

activity has created consequences, which have militated against the "recruitment of all classes of the population into the proletariat." The increasing costs of labor have not simply been a weapon in the fight against the "capitalists." Frequently, the burden of increased wages has rather been shifted in various ways onto farmers, persons with fixed incomes and other groups of consumers. It has also served to eliminate economically weaker industries, thus affecting adversely some groups of capitalists and workers simultaneously. However we may evaluate these conflicts of interests, none of them have diminished in importance as compared with the conflict between capital and labor.

Three other factors may be mentioned which have so far prevented that "proletarization" of capitalist society which Marx anticipated. First, the "new middle class" of salaried employees, of whose importance Marx was aware, has obstinately insisted on its higher social status and has shown strong resistance to any identification with the workers. It has furthermore responded to the actual experience of pauperization with strong sympathies for reactionary rather than revolutionary political movements. (This seems true for Germany but untrue for present-day France; however cf. below.) Second, there exists some doubt whether Marx' philosophical interpretation of the human effect of industry on the workers is an accurate appraisal. His interpretation was a fairly typical response to the abject conditions of the industrial revolution; (at any rate, conservatives like Thomas Carlyle espoused similar views). Evidence from modern research would indicate that Marx may have overestimated the human dissatisfactions which factory labor produces, once the intense suffering of early industrialization had been overcome. Or, perhaps he overestimated the psychological significance of the urge for "creative labor" in the average worker. This is not to deny that his insights in these respects are still valuable. It is to assert rather that he seems to have overemphasized this source of revolutionary action. Third, Marx' expectation of an international labor movement has not been borne out so far. This is connected, I think, with his belief that trade unionism would develop into political action.

There is little doubt that this expectation has been borne out by the intervening historical experience. The development of trade unionism has depended on the legalization of union activities and on the legal stipulation of the conditions of collective bargaining. As a result the unions have tried to improve the legal foundations of their bargaining position through political action and to establish legal safeguards

for the economic ameliorations which they have won for the workers. Frequently, such politcial action has been only another means of furthering trade union activities. This is not the political labor movement Marx had in mind because it cannot challenge the underlying governmental framework of labor relations without endangering the strength of the unions. This statement is only apparently contradicted by the fact that union demands for more economic security eventually involve a "challenge to management prerogatives." To the extent that the success of an individual union depends on the economic success of the enterprise, the latter will be able to refuse the union participation in managerial functions, as long as that economic success continues. There will be many phases to this struggle, but during periods of prosperity its overall result will probably be to limit the political, as distinguished from the economic effectiveness of trade unions. Moreover, the history of trade unionism seems to indicate that prosperity makes it relatively easy for the "capitalists" to refuse political demands, and relatively tempting for the workers to be satisfied with economic concessions.

When the economic fortunes of an enterprise decline, its ability to resist union demands is likely to decline with them. However, it will become increasingly difficult for a union to maintain its position once this decline of the enterprise has set in, because workers will be unemployed and organizational strength will be jeopardized. Political action may then appear to the union as an alternative means of attaining economic gains for its workers and of securing its own survival. Political actions of trade unions are, therefore, related to the economic fortunes of an enterprise and of the economy as a whole. These actions are not the basic challenge which Marx had in mind.

There are some conditions, on the other hand, under which the political interests of trade unions become identified with the "national interest." During both World Wars national interests were given precedence over all other considerations by the unions of Germany (World War I), England, France and the United States. And even during peace-time the effective organization of an international labor movement has been exceedingly difficult, because each country's union-organization identified itself more or less explicitly with its respective "national interests."

This is not the place to analyze the important economic reasons for this relative lack of internationalism on the part of the trade unions. Nor is it intended to deny that many unions in the United States and

elsewhere have shown a truly international spirit in helping their union comrades in other countries and in advocating policies favorable to them in representations to their national governments. But are these actions signs of that international solidarity of the working class which Marx expected to result from the class structure of capitalism? Or has the dependence of trade unionism on the fate of the various national economies kept the national and international development of the political labor movement within narrower limits than Marx anticipated. The thought is not easy to dismiss that the political actions of trade unions have in this sense reflected their dependence on the national economies. As long as there is hope of economic recovery, and as long as a favorable political "climate" prevails, this dependence is likely to restrain political and economic radicalism. Political demands and actions will become more radical, however, in proportion as that hope diminishes. When the masses of the people have lost hope and seek to minimize the inequalities and overcome the hardships of a scarcity economy, then "socialist planning" may be attempted.

Marx himself acknowledged that in England socialism might come into being without a revolution, and that in Russia it might develop directly out of the semi-feudal conditions of the 19th century. But did he say that socialism would occur in the countries of retarded industrialization and of economic decline, rather than in the countries of highest industrialization? His faith in the ultimate classless society and its realization of humanitarian ideals rested in part on his belief that modern technology had created an era of potential abundance. We can see today that humanitarian ideals and democratic institutions are at hazard where scarcity prevails or where it is enforced to insure rapid industrialization.

A SLIGHT ERROR

MOSCOW, Nov. 10 (AP)—The Soviet press published today corrections of earlier reports of Foreign Minister Molotov's speech Thursday on the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Reports published Friday used the phrase "second imperialist war" in referring to World War II. A correction today said Mr. Molotov had been misquoted and that the reference should be to the second World War, not to the second imperialist war.—*New York Times.*

ASSEMBLY LINE

Edward Wahl

Time, the essential element in factory work, and the hands of the timeclock, its measuring apparatus, move slowly after the starting whistle. The long, cloth belts jolt into action, settling to a scraping hum; hammers begin by pinging tentatively against metal, changing until the impact reverberates to a clanging pound. The electric drills whir quietly, picking up speed, then bite into steel with a high pitched scream, files shriek, and the flywheels of the hulking presses spin, then plunk, solidly. Everything moves and sound off; only the timeclocks relax to silence.

Even in the most disciplined factory the day does not begin at once. Cautiously the old hands prepare themselves for the eight hours, shifting tools within easy reach, testing the initial stance. The day begins with care, with an eye for comfort, and in the process two or three minutes of the long day are destroyed. Now begins the problem of killing the rest of the work period.

There are a number of techniques for passing time and the best of them is to become absorbed in the work at hand. This is effective only when the job is experimental and thus engrossing, and there are no templates or patterns or previous knowledge to guide you. Sing into this job, play with it, call on all the skill you've mastered. Now you can forget the white face with the delineated minutes, remembering only the craftiness of material and the ingenuity of tools. When you look up again it will be past your usual time for a smoke, past your first break of the day.

But if you are not highly skilled, if, as I, you are hired at the minimum rate and do only production work, your chance to become mentally involved in your task is a slim one. For the first hour of the very first day it may be tricky enough to warrant and trap your attention, but after that it has no challenge and there is no pride in its daily mastery.

After the first hour of the hiring day, your enemy is the barefaced clock. You don't try to skimp on your job; rather you long for hard

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EDWARD WAHL is an American writer who has contributed to the *Chicago Jewish Forum, Everybody's Digest, This Week,* and *This Month.*

work, for a job that will take the dexterity of your mind and hands. You want it to tear you away from the morning's quarrel with your wife or making this week's pay cover both rent and food. You've got to pass the day somehow, but these are things you learn not to think about.

You can kill time, of course, by taking a regular break every two hours or so. You can walk slowly to the factory latrine, light up and talk with the boys . . . for five or ten minutes. You gauge the minutes by the length of your cigarette and learn just how fast you can smoke it and how much butt must be left for an eight-minute smoke. Allowing one minute for walking each way, you can be back at your bench before the foreman is annoyed.

After a few months though, the regularity of the break and your dependence on it as a means for destroying the day, utterly rob it of its purpose. Your first break on Wednesday (and you cannot prevent the consciousness from seeping through), means that you have six hours left for that day and twenty-two for the rest of the week. Not half the required forty hours is yet past, and only one-quarter of Wednesday.

But that's bench work, and it's not bad. Suppose you're on an assembly line or piecework or a combination of the two. Not only must you battle the reluctance of time and the endless monotony of repetition, but you must work against time, slowing it down in order to fulfill the job requirements.

I was on a radio parts line in New Jersey. At first my job was to keep the line supplied with parts and tools but later I took my lumps along with the producers. My job was to insert and start a screw in a small tuning condenser.

When I fell behind, I met the full impact of the dichotomy. First I had to slow down the clock, working faster than usual; second, I had to speed up the same clock to escape the eternal iteration of the operation.

Needless to say, inserting the screw and turning it once with an automatic screwdriver a sufficient number of times per hour to earn above the sixty-cent minimum does not leave time for much else. On a non-piecework job the annoyance of repetition is somewhat dissipated by free talk and mild horseplay. On this line, tomfoolery was impossible. If I, at my job, were to slow down, the rest of the line had to wait for me, and if I didn't make my quota, they weren't going to make theirs, nor their extra pay. Again, I wasn't at the start of the line and

if I fell behind the cloth belts did not, and condensers piled up all around me. I had to interrupt my work to pull them off the moving belt and stack them. Even the foreman's most casual glance will spot a pile-up of that sort.

So add to the slowness of time and the monotony of work, the tensions of pay and supervision. Now you see why I do not think about my wife's mild protest this morning and her snappishness. If I do, I will exaggerate the mild disagreement until I can't contain it. The pressure of the line, the irritation of muscles that are sick and tired of duplication, are going to turn my case against my wife into a furious anger.

But even with these pressures, even with the line tempo, I could get my break from the line. I managed to make friends and to be comfortable during work, and the moment my foot was outside the factory door, the job no longer existed. I've worked in lots of factories and my experience has been that if you select the proper techniques, and if you persistently ignore monotony, somewhere in the second week comes the tolerance point. This is where you enter the decision as to whether you'll throw the screwdriver at the foreman and walk out or whether you'll stay and stick with it until an extra few dollars or a job opportunity lets you go. Past the tolerance point you're okay for six months and then it starts all over again. Then you change your job within the factory and you're all right. But the tolerance point must come and you must hurdle it by sheer obstinacy.

That's why, when my friend G. returned from Michigan, I was so amused to hear what he had to say about the auto assembly line. G. is a sociologist and he is taking his Ph.D. investigating a phenomenon he calls "occupational mobility" among auto workers. He is a fine person but he has the irritating habit of backing up everything he says with studies and facts and he has the exasperating knack of rarely being wrong. I asked him if he'd been on an assembly line in Michigan:

"For about a month," he replied. "That gave me enough of the feel of automobile manufacture." It is not like G. to be reticent and the only time he is, is when he wishes to be dramatic.

"Let's hear," I said. "The days of men cracking on the line are gone, that I know. I don't imagine workers get mixed with molten steel anymore, like in books. Or that the line is a monster you cannot escape." I said all this with a smirk because the assembly line method is here to stay and I wanted G. to admit that. As I say, G. is no one for drama and is utterly resistant to slogans and rabblerousing speeches.

He went to Michigan to find out what autoworkers live for and where they lived before and he is not one to return with unrelated ideas.

"Sit down," said G. "And stop sneering. You've read Wessel Smitter?"

He was referring to a work of fiction, written about the Ford plant before the UAW-CIO took over. This one had all the trimmings. It made the assembly line as dangerous as Bastogne and the methods of accidental and occasionally purposeful fatality as scarifying and as diversified. Men were crushed under steel, mixed with it at the melting point, caught in machinery and exterminated in a variety of ways.

"Yes," I said. I smiled to show my scepticism.

"Well," said G., keeping a straight face, "the old timers tell me that book was an understatement all the way through."

That was more than I could swallow.

"I'm not kidding," G. went on. "And I don't think the men took me for a tourist. They were sort of awed to be included in a sociological study and they gave me the straight goods."

"G.," I told him, "you're a social scientist and a brilliant scholar but you don't know that reminiscence brings exaggeration. There you were with your ear cupped to listen and they filled you to the brim. By telling you how tough things were in the old days they could build themselves up as heroes and incidentally, push a little propaganda for the union."

"There's only one trouble with that speech," said G. "Except for the accident rate, things have not improved much, I know. I was there."

"Sure," I said agreeably. "Sure thing."

"I'll start from the beginning. And don't forget that I was there and you weren't. I don't care where you've worked or for how long. You've never worked on an auto assembly line but I have. So listen."

I made myself comfortable. I know that the things that horrify a sociologist would not disturb me. Because a social scholar is strictly from the textbook. When he gets out among the masses and discovers that they never heard of evolution and believe they can beat the races, he's thoroughly dismayed. His tongue clucking point is a lot lower than mine.

"First of all, the assembly line in an auto factory is not one but maybe twenty. I can't say just how many because I never got far away

from my own line. There are parts lines, motor lines, sub-assembly lines and final assemblies. I was on the motor line.

"These lines stretch perhaps a quarter mile, sometimes more. The one I was on was about that distance and there were motors set on it every few feet. Most of the time I worked on six cylinder jobs. The eights I'll talk about later.

"My job contained several operations. I had to pick up six studs, threaded at both ends, grease them, and insert them in bored holes in each engine as it came down. With my fingers I give them a start, just enough to hold them in. For the front I'd pick up a bolt, slip a washer on, insert it and slam it all the way in with a power wrench that was suspended from a cable.

"Then I'd pick up the new studs and the wrench and go after the next baby. The line was running sixty an hour when I took over and only once while I was there did it slow down to fifty-three. Most of the time it stayed between fifty-eight and sixty.

"Not too bad," I said. "Except for the monotony."

"Wait a minute. I had to do this in a space marked off by lines. Under ordinary circumstances I couldn't cross the far line: At the very least I was cutting into the next man's working time and I'd hear from him. In other words, I had to run through all these operations in less than sixty seconds, walking along with the engine, then run back, grease the next set of bolts for the new engine and repeat the operation. This for eight hours."

"Still not bad," I said.

"This was one of the easiest jobs in the place. They took special care of me." G. smiled. "The bolts weren't too bad, the worst part was getting them started; takes a steady hand and quite a bit of precision. You'll know what I mean if you're ever done it, especially on a moving piece. Sometimes the bolts are threaded quite right. But the foreman didn't bother to tell me the electric wrench had a kick, or how to ease up on it when the stud is in to the end of its thread.

"You see, the wrench keeps going, and unless you know the exact point at which the stud is in, it's ready to keep turning. The stud doesn't turn anymore; something has to go. It almost tore my arm off. In fifteen minutes I had these silver dollar blisters.

"But you tell me that you count off the day by going for a smoke at certain times. You can't do that on this kind of a line. And you

can't alter your pace either, slow down at ten in the morning for a few minutes and pick up later. You work at one speed, faster, never slower.

"There's one relief man all down the line and you can't leave your place unless he taps your shoulder and motions okay. It doesn't matter what happens, you can't leave. You're allowed one morning break and one in the afternoon and that's all you get. But if anyone is out, or there's a new man who needs help, the relief man steps in and you just don't get a break unless the line stops. Here's an example:

"One day, somebody was out. Now the water fountain was just over in the next position. I tried to get over to it and it wasn't more than thirty feet away, from eight in the morning to noon, for a drink. I never got the chance. And the line was doing no more than fifty-eight."

"Suppose the line stops?" I asked.

"Then I grease a whole batch of studs and try to get ahead of myself."

"I mean, suppose you can't keep up and an engine gets by you, what happens?"

"The line stops."

"What happens to you?"

"If it's the first time, all Hell breaks loose. If it happens again, I leave. Sometimes it stops because parts don't fit or shortages or it just gets stymied. We never bothered to investigate, just took our break. It doesn't happen often.

"Incidentally, that's how they used to fight the speed-up. When it got over sixty say, someone would just accidentally drop a bolt in the line and as soon as it worked its way around to the end, bang, the line would stop. Then there'd be a delay to pick it out and everyone would take his break.

"You saw *Modern Times?*" G. asked.

I had.

"This is it," said G. "This is something you can't get away from and something just as weird. You don't forget the job when you leave the factory. And you don't get used to it.

"The worst of it isn't during working hours. You should have heard the stories from the veterans, the guys who've been there ten, fifteen years.

"One man told me that his hands never stop shaking. He comes

home and for an hour he can't eat, he just has to take it easy until the day's work wears off. Even then his hands keep quivering. His wife has been begging him to quit but he's scared. It's the only trade he knows and if he goes to another plant, it's still the same thing.

"Another man told me he's no good for anything when he comes home. Or rather, his wife told me; he didn't want to talk about it. He comes into the house and he's dazed, 'dopey,' she called it. Probably has something to do with the noise: it's terrific, you know, and never seems to stop. He walks to the couch and just flops down, naps for a while and when he awakes, takes a shower, changes, and becomes human again. By the way, the average occupational life runs to a top of fifteen years. You don't see many production men over forty; thirty-eight is near the oldest. And by that time, they're just about through."

"You have any of these symptoms?"

"You have to be there a while to get the shakes. All I could do when I got home was to eat a little and flop into bed. I was dogtired every night. And I skipped my second day on the job.

"I was so sore and my hands were so blistered, I couldn't move; I didn't even turn off the alarm. One of the old timers sneered at me. 'You'll never make an autoworker,' he told me. 'No real auto man ever takes a day off.'

"To tell the truth," and G. finally abandoned his coolness and his effort to be restrained, "it's pure and simple murder. You're penned up in twenty feet of space and you can't move out of it. You can never lean back for a second or look the other way. Only way to let off steam is to yell, loud. You can't think, you've got to concentrate on the job.

"Except for the two daily breaks, which you don't always get, there's no escaping the line. You can't forget where you are or what you're doing and you must keep working every second; you never stop. That's what's so terrible, I think.

"You try and concentrate for a whole day, without let-up, on one group of physical operations, chores repeated over and over, that require quite a bit of dexterity and a lot of timing. It might be easier if the jobs themselves were, but every one is backbreaking and the way the line is set up makes it Hell on your legs."

G. looked at me. "You don't really get the picture until you're out there. You've got the noise and the tensions, and the endless chas-

ing back and forth. And the motor line is one of the easiest and my job on the line, one of the mildest. And I could quit whenever I wanted; nothing was keeping me there."

"Think what it must mean to a man to do this day after day, needing the money, unable to quit. After he's been there a year or so, he knows pretty well that the odds are set against his becoming a foreman. As long as he's in auto, he'll be on the line. He doesn't want to change his job because that will mean breaking in a new set of muscles, picking up new burns and blisters.

"You talk about factory jobs with monotony, or that time passes slow. Here you have to do at least sixty cars an hour and the hour won't pass until you do. That's four hundred and eighty a day. You can't duck out of that and you can't pretend you don't know what time it is or forget what you're doing.

"And when one of the eight cylinder jobs comes along . . . with eight bolts in the top and two in the front, you just groan. You groan and curse the internal combustion engine.

"No," said my learned friend. "Things haven't changed much. No union and no safety committee is going to remove the impact on the assembly line. You figure the shakes and the forty-year-old men as by-products of cars, like coke and coal."

ONE WAY OF LOOKING AT IT

As this writer is leaving for Europe within a few hours, the news of the devaluation of the Italian lira is most encouraging.—*CIP Correspondence.*

SIMPLE, ISN'T IT?

"Judges are independent and subject only to the law," states Article 112 of the Constitution of the USSR. The Soviet court acts in the name of the State which expresses the interests of the Soviet people. The independence of the Soviet court and its subjection only to the law are real and not illusory. Soviet law defends the interests of the State and of society, which in the land of the Soviets are identical and not contradictory. The interests of society coincide with the legitimate interests of the individual. In guarding society, the law at the same time guards also the individual. In the Soviet State the dream of the French humanist Rousseau has been realized. He wrote: "For the complete happiness of the state it is necessary that . . . laws should be just and always aim at the common good."—Professor I. T. Golyakov, President of the Supreme Court of the USSR, writing in *USSR Information Bulletin.*

BRITAIN FACES BANKRUPTCY

Dudley Seers

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has been living well beyond its means for nearly a decade—in the economic, not the fiscal sense. Britain has been using up goods and services far faster than she has been producing them.

For the first year or two of this decade the difference was covered by running down stocks, letting maintenance programs lapse and selling overseas assets. Then came the Lend-Lease agreements, and loans from "sterling area" countries (mainly involuntary ones in the form of blocked sterling balances). The most recent means of financing the difference between production and utilization has been the line of credit advanced under the U.S.-U.K. Loan Agreement, and a parallel agreement negotiated with Canada. With the end of this credit, Britain faces the future with her last vital reserves of gold and dollar securities.

The original reason for Britain living beyond her income was the war, when there was no question of her justification in doing so. This excess merely reflected in fact the role of Britain as a front-line industrial country, whose duty it was to be a forward arsenal while other members of the United Nations, further from the battle areas and with more agricultural economies, kept up a flow of food and raw materials, without receiving Britain's usual manufactured exports in payment. This situation could not, of course, be changed overnight. The imports kept on flowing in, and Britain's economy only slowly wheeled round to its peacetime path.

It was a new world that Britain faced after the war—a world in which, because basically people can do without manufactures better than they can do without food, food prices had risen further than the prices of British exports. An additional reason for Britain difficulties was the weakening of British control over colonial primary producers with the loosening of imperial bonds. It took more textiles, machine tools, whiskey and automobiles to purchase what the country needs. In addition, because of the sale of assets and the immense new debts

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DUDLEY SEERS is a British writer on economic subjects who is connected with the University of Oxford's Institute of Statistics. He contributed the article "An Economy in Transition" to the April 1947 issue of *Modern Review*.

(such as the "sterling balances") which had been incurred, Britain had to export goods to earn foreign exchange previously received as interest and dividends on foreign capital (the accrued assets of three centuries of successful imperialism): part of her labor force had to be earmarked for the vital immediate job of repairing war damage; coal output, which had been sinking during the war, happened just at this time to reach a level which hampered British industry.

So a substantial trade deficit in the first post-war months was inevitable. The key question is: Why does it still continue now, a quarter of a decade after V-E Day? To answer that, one has to look at the uses to which the nation's resources are being put. The table which follows shows the value of different sorts of expenditure after correcting for price changes:

National Outlay of United Kingdom, Pre-war and Post-war [1]
(£ billions at 1945 prices)

	1938	1946
Consumption	5.38	5.28
Net Capital Formation	0.70	0.64
Defense	0.45	1.57
Other Public Spending	0.58	0.60
TOTAL	7.11	8.09

It is obvious that the increase in United Kingdom outlay is not due to increases in overall consumption, which is shown to be slightly below pre-war (despite an increase in population), nor in capital construction, nor in general government spending, but to an enormous increase in the defense expenditure, now using some three times the resources of pre-war. (The 1947 picture would be much the same.) To put this point another way, over a million men are in the forces compared to some four hundred thousand before the war. The difference constitutes the men who are missing from the mines, the export industries, the building labor force, the consumers' goods industries, and so forth. While national production appears to have increased somewhat, the combination of the turning of the terms of trade against the United Kingdom and the expansion of defense spending more than cover this increase and mean that we cannot cover any longer our use of resources from our own output. We have to run a deficit in our

[1] The full details of calculations are given in an article of the author in the *Bulletin of the Oxford University Institute of Statistics,* July 1947.

trade balance to maintain consumption and capital construction near pre-war levels.

This is the basic reason for the fact that Britain is living beyond her resources. Unable to exert the same influence as she did before the war, she is tempted to keep large armed forces to give strength to Bevin's elbow. But it is proving impossible to maintain a debit in our balance of payments on the present scale. The key political question this autumn has been: What forms of expenditure should be cut?

The main theme of the Right (the *Economist,* the *Financial Times,* etc.) has been to cut consumption by abolishing subsidies on food and clothing, so as to raise their prices above what the working class can afford. Another influential section of the Right wants the emphasis put on cutting capital investment. This is the line advocated by the Federation of British Industries (which corresponds to the N.A.M.). The Left (the *New Statesman* and *Tribune*) wants to see cuts in defense spending—a line that naturally appeals to the one-third or so of the labor movement that is opposed to Bevin's foreign policy. And if consumption has to be cut, let it be luxury consumption, Socialists say.

The Government is in fact combining elements of all of these policies. Subsidies are not to be increased if food prices rise further. Rations are slashed. Foreign travel is prohibited. Goods made for home consumption are to be diverted to exports. Capital expenditure is to be cut by nearly £200 millions. (A White Paper issued in December shows that construction of new factories is to be stopped, building of most of the planned new satellite towns is to be postponed, and more plant of all kind, particularly hydro-electric plant, is to be sold to foreign buyers instead of to home industries.) The demobilization of the Armed forces is to be accelerated slightly. Yet it is admitted that even by the end of next year our foreign trade problems will not be solved. The assumption that the Marshall Plan will be accepted by Congress is implicit in the Government's calculations.

It is difficult to see what the British Government could do *now* to solve its dollar problem. Even if by heroic efforts, and accepting a reduced role in the world, Britain balanced her *overall* trade, she would still be unable to balance her *dollar* payments. This she did before the war, not by selling goods to the United States direct, but to third countries (notably Malaya) which themselves had large exports to the United States. These dollar sources are now almost completely blocked, and Britain must depend on her own trickle of exports to the U.S. and on U. S. aid, to buy imports from countries in the "hard currency" area (for Canada and the Argentine also insist on dollars). Many of

these imports are vital, such as meat, wheat and cotton. The picture that emerges is one of economic dependence on America such as is hardly compatible with greater power status.

II

Those are the bare economic outlines of the problem. How does this situation affect the internal social and economic structure?

One effect of the diversion of goods to exports and the cuts in imports is to increase the gap between total private income and the flow of goods to the home market—the gap that is responsible for the inflationary pressure on the British economy. So the Government introduced in mid-November a special budget, whose main features were a general increase in the sales taxes which are imposed on luxury and semi-luxury goods, a new tax on pari-mutual betting, and extra alcohol taxes—the effect being to help close the gap by increasing prices. Another is to encourage the flow of labor into export industries. In other ways, too, luxuries are being curtailed. The direction of labor is steering people away from "non-productive" work—and may catch those of the rentier, "man-about-town" type who are not shrewd enough to organize a "directorship" for themselves.

All this discouragement to luxury living has been imposed on top of the levelling of living standards caused by the still continuing scarcity of labor and food subsidies on the one hand, and rent and price controls plus stiff direct taxes on the other. The total effect is to slough off a large part of Veblenite "conspicuous consumption." Less money is left over for it, and at the same time it is much more expensive. Once a modern society adopts the principle of maintaining basic living standards at the cost of non-essentials, the pressure on luxury living will continue. For supposing some non-essential is omitted from the general price rise in luxury goods, it becomes extremely attractive. As the demand for it increases, if its price is uncontrolled, it will become more expensive. If its price is fixed, and output cannot be increased, it will gravitate to the black market. If its output can be increased, it will attract notoriety by using scarce resources and foreign exchange needed to maintain the basic living standards, and it will probably be attacked with stiff taxes, labor controls, etc. Through this mechanism, the prices of cigarettes, drinks, cosmetics, books, gambling, antique furniture, theatre-going, victrola records, fur coats and restaurant meals, have increased substantially in the past few months, *without any corresponding increases in middle or upper class incomes* (which appears to distinguish the U.K. situation from that of other countries subject to inflationary pressure). The would-be *bon viveur* is sent scurrying hope-

lessly from one luxury product to the next, in search of "value for money."

This situation is of course extremely distasteful to those who argue that the "high life" is the *real life*—that it is worthwhile having the masses drag out their squalid existence if this but enables some to live graciously. But this argument is very ineffective in the still essentially puritanical moral climate of Britain, and in the political context of a labor administration and powerful unionism. It is inevitable that Britain should attempt to liquidate her bankruptcy (albeit largely unconsciously) at the expense of "the finer side of life."

The only sections whose living standards have substantially risen are the petty racketeers (ex-*lumpen proletariat*) for whom the difference between the cost price and potential sales price of luxury goods spells opportunity; and some petit bourgeois merchants and craftsmen who can make illegal or semi-legal profits out of the inflationary situation. In addition the pre-war unemployed and large sections of the unskilled are substanitally better off (though many of them are unmindful of the fact).

For the whole of the "respectable" classes, the post-war world is a bitter place. What is from a national point of view an eminently sound process of concentration on necessities means for individual members of the middle classes a restriction of the personality. The annual skiing holiday in Switzerland, the purchase of a new suit at each change of season, the car journey to places of historic interest, the regular bottle of whiskey, a change of shirt three times a week, the "nanny" for the children, the daily bath—these "unnecessary" activities which are all virtually impossible now, for various reasons, were not *part* of life to the good English bourgeois. They were life itself. He feels a different and lesser being for the lack of them.

What in fact has happened is that each stratum of the middle class has taken on some of the characteristics of the layers immediately below. In a society which is as rigidly stratified as Great Britain's, this causes a considerable amount of personal anguish, since the main object, I think it is true to say, of a majority of the middle class is precisely to avoid a social decline of this sort. The blow is partly softened by the fact that those below have slipped also, so that there is no relative decline; but on the other hand, the general levelling of post-tax incomes combined with the meteoric rise of those able to profit from the inflationary condition, have meant a confusion of social values extremely distasteful to those who place importance on these things. While the squire is still recognized as the conventional social

head of the village, his economic situation may very well be worse now than that of the publican, and the vicar is almost certainly poorer than most of the farmers in his flock. (With the fall in the real value of property income and the failure of donations from today's public to expand sufficiently, the Church of Eugland is finding it hard to maintain its ministers adequately or to recruit new ones, and the provisions of religious services is definitely one victim of the economic crisis.) Another example of the same process is that the landowning class has given ground in the "society" columns of the press (and in the cosmetic advertisements) to the film stars, the true elite of a managerial society.

Particularly distressed by recent developments are those at or near retirement age. As in all countries the middle classes start in their late 40's to calculate the cost of a certain standard of life during retirement, estimate the capital required to purchase the necessary annuities, and arrange their current savings accordingly. An ideal picture of retirement starts to form in their minds and provides the incentive to further effort and the sacrifice of current luxuries. What has in fact happened now is that their effort and sacrifices have been made vain by the developments noted above. They face an "empty" retirement, devoid of the little luxuries they had planned.

The bitterness of the middle classes is not alleviated by any expectation that their position will be substantially improved in the future. It is likely that the terms of trade will be improved, that the "bottlenecks" in U.K. production will be solved, allowing national production to rise, and that the dollar-earning capacity of foreign customers will improve, permitting some sort of resumption of British solvency. But the general middle-class fear is that the working classes will in effect appropriate this added product by pushing for higher wages and shorter hours. (The 40-hour week is an important target for the unions.) In fact there is already considerable pressure from union members in favor of a more militant policy, so as to appropriate a larger share of the existing national product, a pressure reflected in sporadic outbreaks of "wildcat" strikes.

Yet neither can the terms of trade be improved nor the general dollar shortage be eased, unless there is a general improvement in the international situation. Britain is perched on the edge of a continent in which not only countries, but parties, families and individuals are eternally divided by the struggle between "Eastern" and "Western" concepts of democracy. Solution of these divisions seems impossible without the complete victory of either one concept or the other. But victory of "Western" forces (which now means Right-wing rather than

Center forces, in view of the latter's collapse) would imply a great increase in the economic and strategic power of the United States vis-a-vis Britain, as well as vis-a-vis Soviet Russia. The British middle class fears, with good reason, that it cannot overcome both these threats—an unpleasantly novel feeling, in the view of the previous British ability to achieve any two or three of her major objectives of foreign policy.

Bourgeois Britain has almost entirely dropped its transient wartime Russophilia, which was neither very genuine nor very deep. The "Bolshevik phase" of *The Times* (when it was known as the "threepenny edition of the *Daily Worker*," because of its support for Russian objectives in Eastern Europe) is over. But it would be wrong to suppose that any sweeping Americophilia has taken its place. The United States is still considered a powerful, even a dangerous, competitor, in international trade; her assumption of the position in world diplomacy that was previously Britain's naturally causes some heartburning, particularly in diplomatic and military circles; and the relation of dependence is, by general recognition, hardly the best basis for friendship. British tourists on the continent, before the travel ban, noted wistfully the effect of American influence on both the language and the dress of Europe. Terms like "boogie-woogie" are as much part of Europe's common language as "English rostbif" once was; and the smartest men's shop in any of the smaller cities has probably changed its name from "The British Esquire" to "American Men's Wear." The said tourists probably also saw sadly that the red carpet, with all that goes with it, was laid down by Europe's hosteliers for the G.I. from Syracuse, N. Y., but not for the retired British General from Poona. To the humiliation of the British bourgeois in his own country is added the displeasing personal consequences of the loss of world hegemony.

III

I have outlined the impact of the British economic crisis on the middle class at some length, because this impact has been felt not only by the middle class proper, but also, to a slightly lesser degree, by the petit bourgeoisie and higher paid skilled workers, two groups which between them hold the political balance of power. Though these classes do not feel quite the same range of handships as do their immediate social superiors, they too are nostalgic for many of their pre-war amenities—motor-cycles and baby automobiles, "chars" (domestic helpers), nips of gin, greyhound racing on weekday evenings, iced cakes for tea, and so forth. Even those who were in actual fact unable to afford these

luxuries remember hoping to reach a position that would enable them to do so, and are somewhat bitter that their larger wage-packets are unable to purchase these scraps of social status. The economic standing of many of these groups (especially male clerks, whose salaries have lagged behind the general income inflation) is undistinguishable from that of the proletariat proper. Unable, for example, to afford private doctors, they are forced to join the dismal queues at the public hospitals (to many of them a fate truly worse than death). And the hope of a job carrying relative power in the outpost of Empire is greatly diminished.

Middle-class values reach right down through British society and any burden imposed on the middle classes is also felt to some extent by the working class as well. This is due partly to the persistently Labor-baiting tone of the press, and partly to the remnants of feudal "respect for the opinions of one's social betters." It is true, of course, that all these lower strata would lose much more by a change of government than they would gain. The Conservatives, for example, would almost certainly abolish the subsidies on food and clothes, and reduce direct taxes. But those who are just outside the working classes, or hope to be, associate Conservative rule with the possibility of small luxuries, and they imagine that by some magic the luxuries would reappear. So they would—but not for the lower-middle and working classes, who would have their hands full keeping pace with the food prices. It is only the upper-middle classes, and the upper classes proper, who would definitely gain on balance.

IV

The effect of all these restrictions is therefore that the Government loses support in middle class and even in working class circles that follow a middle-class lead. A recent Gallup Poll indicated that for the first time since the war the Conservatives had more support than the Labor Party. The sweeping Labor losses at the recent municipal elections are also significant.

A second aspect of the same change is that many journals which pride themselves on their lack of partisanship, and which have great influence among the middle classes, notably *The Times, Manchester Guardian,* and *Economist,* have turned to fairly sharp criticism of the Government's domestic policy. In this they reflect the trend of opinion among their readers and their staff.

A third consequence is that there is noticeably less tolerance in

political argument today. The middle classes, who are most fond of this pastime, feel the economic pressure too keenly to be able to maintain their former objectivity. It is one thing to talk about economic planning and nationalization in terms of relative efficiencies of technique as was done at the 1945 General Election—and quite another thing to discuss with the same Olympian detachment whether our foreign exchange position permits us the luxury of private motoring. Large sections of the middle class (whose effusions often reach foreign ears) becomes almost hysterical discussing politics.

This growing intolerance has not yet taken a sinister turn. The lieutenants of Sir Oswald Mosley, local would-be Fuehrer, are campaigning with energy, but without making too great an impression. On the other hand, the virulent anti-Socialism of the Housewives' League, the enthusiastic reception given to a rather totalitarian speech at the Conservative Party Conference, and the prevalent anti-Semitism, are signals to be noted. The economic environment is obviously healthy for the growth of a Fascist movement—and the international situation is such as to breed fanatical anti-radicalism in time.

A fourth consequence is a sense of defeatism which may in time have incalculable consequences. A book attracting a great deal of attention and long reviews is *Are These Hardships Necessary?* by Roy Harrod, a right-wing Keynesian. Its theme is that we can maintain our living standards *and* solve our trade problems if we cut capital investment. Yet this would of course only improve our present condition at the cost of postponing the eventual cure—to earn our imports by competing efficiently in the export markets. This is nevertheless an attractive solution to those of the middle upper classes who say wearily: "The world is going to crash. England is going to the dogs. Let us hope only that things hold together for our lifetime." This, of course, is not the spirit of a dynamic society, confident it can solve its problems.

A rather disturbing feature to a British observer is the reliance placed on the Marshall Plan for solving our immediate problems. No alternative policy has any considerable support in either Conservative or Labor circles. There seems to be a general unwillingness to face the consequences of balancing our dollar accounts by ruthless slashing at imports, an unwillingness which is very understandable (since such cuts would mean near-starvation) but nonetheless unfortunate, since it gives the Government little room for maneuver in discussing the terms on which aid will be granted, or in framing foreign policy.

On the longer view of our trade problems there is some uneasi-

ness, since we can expand our exports sufficiently to finance the necessary imports only if there is a great expansion in world trade. But such an expansion probably implies a lessening of trade restrictions and under freer conditions of trade it would be hard for this country to compete effectively against United States manufacturers in many commodity lines. The great hope of Britain is that there will be a general raising of living standards throughout the world which would create great new markets for Britain's fine textiles, small automobiles, luxury liners, etc. If that happens, the question of how international trade is organized will be of secondary importance.

But that is taking a very long (and, in the opinion of many, a very optimistic) view. In the meantime the struggle for the division of the restricted national cake is creating, and will continue to create, fresh strains in the structure of British society and extremely severe tests for British social democracy.

ADD IMPORTANT AFTER-THOUGHTS

There are signs that on the ruins of the old conception of empire the bonds of co-operation are growing among all Middle Eastern countries, from Turkey to Pakistan, and that Britain can play here a rôle as moral leader and disinterested adviser.

Yet that rôle cannot be quite disinterested either, for the plain truth is that one of the main streams of our national economy—oil—has its source in Persia and the Arab world.—*Manchester Guardian.*

MORAL LESSON

How great is the need for such a film as "Gentleman's Agreement" is perhaps tragically illustrated by an experience Moss Hart had when the picture had just been completed.

"You know," a stagehand is reported to have said to Mr. Hart, "I've loved working on this picture of yours. Usually I play gin-rummy with the boys when scenes are being shot. But not this time. This time I couldn't leave the set. The picture has such a wonderful moral I didn't want to miss it."

"Really," beamed Mr. Hart, pleased not only as a scenarist but as a reformer. "That's fine. What's the moral as you see it?"

"Well, I tell you," replied the stagehand. "Henceforth I'm always going to be good to Jewish people because you never can tell when they will turn out to be Gentiles."—John Mason Brown in *Saturday Review of Literature.*

REPORTS

THE ANTWERP CONFERENCE

Maurice J. Goldbloom

Antwerp, Belgium

When delegates and observers from socialist parties in 22 countries met here November 28, at least some of those present hoped that the Conference might mark a major step forward toward the reconstruction of a Socialist International which could offer the world a real alternative to Communist dictatorship on the one hand and capitalism on the other. When the delegates left on December 2, none of them thought that there was an immediate prospect of the creation of such an International. However wide the differences which existed among the parties of the Labor Socialist International before it was destroyed by fascism and war, all of them shared a common outlook on the main problems that confronted the world. This did not seem to be true of the parties which met in Antwerp. For there were delegates whose parties had been denounced by the "Cominform" as "agents of American imperialism," and there were also delegates who had endorsed the Warsaw declaration of that organization. Hence, whereas the old International was generally able to agree on what was to be done—although it was never too effective at doing it—the Antwerp Conference was characterized by fundamental disagreements as to what Socialist should do in the world today.

THREE GROUPINGS

Roughly speaking, there were three main groups at the Conference. First, there were those parties from Eastern Europe which were participating in coalition governments more or less controlled by the Communists. This bloc had the general support of the Italian Socialist Party, led by Pietro Nenni, and of some of the individual members of other delegations. Second, there were those Western parties which felt it necessary to take a clear stand in favor of democratic socialism and against totalitarianism of *all brands*. And finally there were those parties, such as the British and French, whose delegates seemed to feel that keeping supporters of democracy and supporters of "Eastern democracy" in one organization was more

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MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM was formerly associate editor of *Common Sense* and now conducts "The Month in History" department in *Commentary*. He was official observer for the Socialist Party U. S. A. at the Antwerp Conference. Another view of the Antwerp Conference is presented by a Belgian journalist in the "International Press" section of this issue.

important than either socialist principles or effective action. Some members of this group, such as Professor Harold Laski, seemed also to be motivated by the fact that they dislike the Government of the United States at least as much as they do that of the Soviet Union.

It was this last group which dominated the Conference, both because it held the balance of power in terms of votes, and because at least nominally it represented the strongest parties present. How far it actually represented these parties is another question. In general, Harold Laski has not been much more representative of British Labor Party policy than Henry Wallace has been of the Truman administration. The fact that the British sent Laski as head of their delegation appears to indicate the small amount of interest they take in international socialism. Similarly, the French delegation was headed by Solomon Grumbach, defeated for the Executive Committee of the French party after being charged with being too friendly with the Communists.

Indeed, one of the striking impressions which one derived from the Conference was the absence of the principal leaders of international socialism. The British delegation failed to include a single cabinet member or any outstanding trade union leader. Only one member of the Labor Party Executive attended—and that one unrepresentative of general party policy. The French delegation included no cabinet member and neither the secretary of the party (Guy Mollet was named a delegate but did not come) nor the outstanding leader of the party, Leon Blum. Even the Socialist Premier and ex-Premier of the host country, Messrs. Spaak and Van Acker, were not included in the Belgian delegation and did not appear at the Conference. The absence of the major party leaders indicated a rather low opinion of what the Conference was likely to accomplish. Unfortunately, this opinion turned out to be justified.

On the other hand, the delegations of both the pro-Communist bloc and the strongly anti-Communist parties were of much higher quality. Thus Poland sent the trade union leader Rusinek; the Hungarian delegation included both Deputy Prime Minister Szakasits and Antal Ban, leader of the recent rebellion in that party against Communist domination; Pietro Nenni and his party secretary, Lelio Basso, were both among the Italian delegates. If they had been faced only with the British, French, and Belgian delegations, these groups would have had a field-day. Fortunately, the cause of democratic socialism was ably presented by Koos Vorrink, chairman of the Dutch Labor Party; Haakon Lie, secretary of the Norwegian Labor Party, and Adolf Schaerf, vice-Chancellor of Austria. Vorrink and Lie were easily the outstanding personalities of the Conference, both in the clarity of their democratic socialist position, and in the ability, consistency, and courage with which they presented it.

DIVISION EMPHASIZED EARLY

The division between Eastern and Western parties became obvious at the first session when the question of seating the Bulgarian delegation arose. Here there were two "Social-Democratic" parties seeking recognition—one led by Koniev and Neikov, forming a part of the Communist-

dominated government, which executed the peasant leader Nicola Petkov; the other led by Kosta Lulchev, forming a part of the almost completely suppressed democratic opposition of which Petkov had been the leader. An investigation commission, set up by the Zurich Conference and headed by Isabel Blume, a strongly pro-Communist member of the Belgian Socialist Party (and one of its delegates at this conference), recommended the seating of the Koniev-Neikov party on the ground that it was a "genuine mass party" while the Lulchev party had no press and little support in terms of vote. A similar situation had confronted the Zurich Conference in the case of Rumania, and it had accepted the pro-Communist party headed by the former anti-Semitic leader Radaceanu in preference to the independent party of the veteran Social Democrat Titul Petrescu. But since Zurich, the Radaceanu party had merged itself into the Rumanian Communist Party, a fact that convinced even the British that they might have made a mistake in admitting it. As a result they were more cautious in regard to Bulgaria. Indeed, Denis Healey of Great Britain declared that Lulchev was more representative of socialist sentiment than Neikov and had greater moral claims to recognition. However, he argued, the Neikov party consisted of genuine socialists who would support Lulchev if they dared, and that the Lulchev party was isolated by suppression. He urged, therefore, that the Neikov delegation be seated as observers but not as delegates! This was the way the problem was ultimately "solved" despite the vigorous opposition of the Netherlands.

COMPROMISE "SOLUTIONS"

The presence of the Eastern bloc made itself felt most strongly in the discussion of the political and economic resolutions of the Conference. Here, everything centered on the Marshall Plan and the Cominform. Almost every speech dealt with one or the other. Yet the resolution finally adopted mentioned neither by name. The basic resolution declared: "The collaboration of the sixteen countries represented at the Paris Conference is approved by the socialists of most of these countries. . . . At the same time, the nations of Eastern Europe are engaged in increasing economic cooperation between themselves, and this cooperation also is approved by the socialist parties of Eastern Europe represented at this conference." The resolution also deplored "the aggravation of divisions in international working-class circles provoked by the aggressions of which democratic socialism has recently been the object" and rejected "the attacks against the socialist parties of Great Britain and France, and particularly against men like Leon Blum and Attlee." The only reference to Russia's destruction of democracy in Eastern Europe was a glittering generality: "The Conference also condemns every intervention directed in any country against the democratic will of the people." Since no government—least of all that of Russia—has ever admitted that its intervention answered this description, the passage could offend no one.

Another section of the resolution, dealing with displaced persons, also caused lengthy debate. Here the issue was whether to confine it to victims of Nazism, or to include those forced to flee from Eastern Europe by the

present totalitarian regimes. In arguing for such inclusion, Koos Vorrink declared: "I say that the day may come when some of those who are sitting here with us voting 'Yes' or 'No' will come to ask us for the right of asylum." Nevertheless his amendment was voted down in favor of a compromise referring to "victims of Nazism, fascism and war."

Even the fact that the resolution was critical of the Western powers but never specifically of Russia or her satellites, however, was not sufficient to satisfy some of the parties present. Hochfeld of Poland and Basso of Italy urged the adoption of a substitute resolution introduced by Poland. Basso attacked the draft resolution on the ground that it was based on the idea that socialists should represent a "third force," independent of both communist and bourgeois parties. At this point even Harold Laski became so fed up that he challenged the Eastern parties to state whether there was any possibility of cooperation between them and those of the West, or whether they wished to declare that there was a line with themselves on one side and everyone else on the other.

GERMAN PARTY ADMITTED

The division between East and West again emerged sharply in the discussion over admitting the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. Here, Rusinek of Poland declared that while his party had accepted compromises on many questions (others found it difficult to remember what they were), it could accept none on this. Haakon Lie of Norway, speaking on behalf of the four Scandinavian parties, declared that they felt they had more in common with the German Social-Democrats than with some of the other parties represented at the Conference. On the vote, fourteen parties—including Switzerland and Belgium, which had abstained at Zurich—voted for admission; the Bund and Italy abstained; and four—Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poale Zion voted against admission.

The American Socialist Party was represented at the Conference by the writer, with the status of observer. Leon Dennen, European representative of the Social Democratic Federation, was also in Antwerp during part of the Conference. The two Americans issued a joint statement on behalf of all organized American Socialists, in which they urged the establishment of a new international of all truly democratic socialists. They declared:

> Only such an International, with a clear and positive program of democratic socialism, can effectively fight the totalitarianism of the right and so-called left. It must be based on agreement with regard to fundamental principles, not on any attempt to reconcile irreconcilables in the interest of expediency It must be open to all socialists who subscribe to these principles—not only to those who sit in cabinets, but to those like Titel Petrescu, just arrested in Rumania, who uphold genuine democracy at the risk of their lives.
>
> Just as the Marshall Plan is essential to the economic reconstruction of Europe, so such an International is essential to its political reconstruction The political and economic rebirth of Europe must go hand in hand.

An International such as the above statement outlines, however, is obviously a long way off.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

BANKRUPTCY OF A CLASS

The French writer Thierry Maulnier has written an extremely stimulating article which appeared some months ago in a French review under the title "The Bankruptcy of the Bourgeoisie." We quote from the version which was reprinted in the French language magazine *France-Amerique* for October 10, 1947.

As with individuals so with societies, writes Mr. Maulnier. We know what dies but ignore what is born and going to be born. It is impossible for us to distinguish clearly the lines of development of the society of tomorrow, because these lines—not being pre-established—must be traced by us. Nevertheless we can ever more clearly perceive the signs of agony of our whole economic and social universe and of the imminent disappearance of the class which was its main beneficiary. We cannot claim to know that we are entering into a proletarian era, but we can affirm that we are leaving the bourgeois era. The verdict of history has already been pronounced.

The bourgeoisie is dying not because of some internal affliction but rather because of the immeasurable increase of its own means of power. It is linked historically to the prodigious development of applied science and technology, but it begins to totter precisely when these means develop in the most triumphal manner. The iron horse, which the bourgeoisie of the 19th century mounted to conquer the world, is now throwing its rider.

This class, ever preoccupied with the accumulation of the symbols of wealth, has never inquired into the mechanism of its own domination. This is the reason that the development of technology, modifying the relations between men, has not been understood by it. It continued to believe that it might be possible to reconcile in some fashion the extraordinarily rapid transformation of its technological basis with the stability which it considered necessary for the continuance of its privileges.

The most formidable announcements of impending events, the socialist movements, working-class revolts, the Russian Revolution, did not suffice to make the bourgeoisie listen. They did not want to hear and they have thus lost the chance to take the lead themselves in introducing the necessary structural changes. Those unable to understand history must inevitably bow to it.

II

The great fault of the bourgeoisie has been its lack of consciousness. It has not foundered in orgies of corruption and immoralism as have other decadent ruling classes in the course of history. The bourgeois is still an "honest man." He is honest in his commercial transactions; he leads a well-ordered family life; he has wife and children even if he also has a mistress—he shows a measure of discretion in this respect. He tries to beat the tax collector, but so does everyone. If he is not strict about church attendance, his wife is supposed to represent him in religious matters. His great preoccupation in life is work. But neither seriousness, nor instinct of workman-

ship, nor austerity, nor dignity suffice to establish the right of a class to rule.

We live through the closing years of an epoch in which hundreds of millions of men have been systematically deprived of a part of the product of their labor by masters who yet are not robbers; in an epoch in which social injustice prevails, and yet, the masters are not unjust; in an age in which millions have died for masters who are yet not cruel but who are unable to understand that the basis of their domination is crumbling under their feet, even though they are not unintelligent. The real crime of the bourgeoisie may lie precisely in the fact that so much honesty, workmanship, labor, culture and moral rectitude has led to so much disorder, blood spilling and anarchy.

III

To understand this phenomenon in its entirety we would have to engage in collective psycho-analysis of the bourgeoisie. A collectivity, just as in the case of an individual, tends to suppress dangerous thoughts which might menace its peace of mind. For this reason the bourgeoisie has never dared to analyze its own historical situation. It feels obscurely that such analysis would threaten the basis of its own domination. This is why proletarian thinkers have gone so much farther in their investigations. Consciousness served them while the Unconscious served the bourgeoisie—if not in its immediate, at least in its long-range interests.

Marxist theoreticians have thoroughly studied the mechanism of what they call "mystification"; i.e., the process by which a ruling class imposes everything that furthers its own domination under the guise of Truth and Absolute Justice. But this process of mystification is accompanied by a sort of auto-mystification which is no less remarkable. When a representative of the bourgeoise, for example, attempts to explain that working-class activity is the cause of social disorder rather than its effect, he does not lie. He merely mystifies himself.

IV

The capitalist regime is not the only possible form of economic organization. There are at least two others: a nationalized, collective society in which the State substitutes itself for the privileged class in order to concentrate all means of production and profit into its own hands, and a society in which the workers own that part of the productive capital that is in proportion to their own labor. The first type of regime, capitalism, is on its way out. If one tries obstinately to maintain it, one will get the second form. If we don't want that, we must work to create the third.

ANTWERP CONFERENCE—BELGIAN VIEW

Victor Larock, editor of the Belgian socialist daily *Le Peuple,* contributes to the December 3 issue of his paper some notes on the recent international meeting of socialist parties in Antwerp. His article is is part an indirect reply to the articles by Mr. Abramovitch and Mr. Topalovitch in the Septemper issue of *Modern Review.* Mr. Abramovitch, a member of our editorial board, stated that the socialist parties of the Russian satellite states have "ceased to be 'free' politically, especially as far as problems of foreign policy and international relations are concerned"

and therefore "cease to be acceptable partners to the free and autonomous socialist parties of the democratic countries of the West in the work of rebuilding the Socialist International." Mr. Larock thinks otherwise.

Zhdanov must really see the situation as he wants to see it (Mr. Larock begins), if he believes that international "social democracy" slapped on its right cheek will now turn its left cheek. At the International Socialist Conference at Antwerp his proclamations had no effect. They received almost no attention—five lines in the final resolution which was more than enough. International socialism in the past resisted the tactics of "open arms"; it will certainly not succumb now to the tactics of the raised fist.

The Rumanian Socialist Party has been swallowed up. Many of our comrades, both here and abroad, fear the other parties of the East will suffer the same fate. This is why they are irritated by certain collaboration in which they can see only an abdication of independence. If their anxieties are justified, their reproaches are less so. If I were to express myself in crude, sloganized form, I would say that they sound like privileged parents scolding children.

In what respect are we socialists of the West privileged in relation to our Hungarian and Polish comrades? While Stalinism has chosen the role of opposition in France and the whole of Western Europe, thus revealing its inner weakness, the situation in the East is basically different. It is easy enough to denounce Communist domination in those countries. This domination is that of a minority party, backed by an all-powerful neighboring state. But would that domination not become even more oppressive if it were to be attacked at the same time by reaction *and* by the socialists?

We are indignant—and with good reason—when we witness the violations of freedom, electoral irregularities, arbitrary measures and all these trappings of fascism that the "new democracies" trail in their wake. But aren't these the inevitable aftermath of a long history of oppression? And when we accuse the oppressed of yesterday who are now in power, can we overlook the responsibilities of those who held power before them—the responsibilities of that bourgeoisie, of that aristocracy, which, in both Hungary and Poland, taught the masses only too thoroughly by their example the rule of force?

"Believe me," said a delegate of one of the Eastern parties at Antwerp, "for us and for you there exists only *one* definition and *one* form of true democracy. But need I remind men who have read Engels that "freedom is only the understanding of necessity" and that our action, if it is to be effective, must take prevailing circumstances into account. Several roads lead to democracy. You have chosen yours long ago. We are just emerging, however, from a social and economic revolution which imposes upon us a direction which has to be followed. Certain violations and certain violences are inevitable. We try to limit them. We deplore them. We have often denounced them in our papers and in our meetings. But under the pretext of liberalism, we cannot afford to play the game of counter-revolution."

This time the desired communication between the parties of the East and those of the West has really occurred. Unfortunately it came at a time when fear of war impelled the Soviets and the parties at their command to tighten their grip on the countries in their zone of influence—to try to engage in a show of strength with the regimes of the West and with Social Democracy. Despite this most parties represented at Antwerp understood that if in Western Europe the socialist duty is to give blow for blow, the question in the East is to define those limits at which collaboration would yield to abdication.

As to the rest, it is clearly understood that each party is to be responsible only for its own line of action, and, in contradistinction to the Cominform, this International without name and without status which was formed at Antwerp leaves to each member party the fullest freedom to carry on its affairs as it choses. The community of principles, the identity of objectives have been reaffirmed. A greater solidarity has found expression. But that is all. We are a federation of parties, free in respect to each other—parties which in every country (with the varying means at their disposal) fight to remain free.

The final motion adopted at Antwerp presages the beginnings of a new International. Until now there have been only periodic conferences, a consultative commission, an information center. All these institutions will be continued, but they are now placed on a more permanent basis. A standing committee has been appointed, regional conferences are to be called.

"The Socialists have reconstituted their International: we can do likewise," declared Zhdanov in his report to the founding conference of the Cominform. He anticipated. No, the Socialist International does not yet exist, but an important stage in the process has been reached. By his attacks, Zhdanov may speed up that process. It is only fair to thank him for that service.

PERSPECTIVE ON PLANNING

The Italian socialist bi-weekly *Critica Sociale* (Saragat) has published several articles of late dealing with the problem of a planned economy, and its compatibility, or incompatibility, with personal and political freedom; also the place the concept of planning should occupy in democratic socialist theory. The problem has become an extremely controversial one for the socialist movement not only because of the terrifying example provided by the Soviet Union, which has turned state planning into a powerful instrument of terroristic dictatorship, but also because of the more than questionable results of recent experience with partially "directed economies" in several countries on the European continent, including Italy herself.

In *Critica Sociale* for October 16, Fausto Pagliari has an article entitled "Planning in Theory and Practice." The article is primarily a survey of other writings about planning and deals particularly with the Russian experience. Nevertheless Mr. Pagliari makes his own position quite clear. He stresses the fact that owing to certain relationship of

forces, a planned economy can easily become an efficient instrument of mass enslavement in the hands of a restricted oligarchy. Generally, he argues, a collectivist system is not incompatible with the pursuit of goals completely opposed to those of socialism. It is still not unusual to find socialism treated as synonymous with a system of planned economy—a system which seeks more efficient utilization of the productive forces even though it fails to defend the interests of the lower classes or to provide for the equitable distribution of the riches obtained. The essence of socialism, however, is the abolition of all causes of class inequality and class privilege. This concept is precisely what the anti-Bolshevik socialists of all tendencies are opposing to the totalitarian Soviet system of planned economy. They deny the socialist character of this totalitarian system and consider it a new economic form, either transitional or permanent, which may be given various labels: totalitarian state economy, state socialism, technocracy, rule of managers, bureaucratic collectivism, etc. It is neither capitalism nor socialism, but a third form—a form toward which monopoly capitalism also is headed.

In an article entitled *"Dirigismo"* ("Directed Economy") Riccardo Bauer (November 1 issue of *Critica Sociale*) attempts to explain why the "regulated economy" introduced in Italy since the war has become a kind of "bureaucratic collectivism" which is inefficient and favors speculation and other abuses. The development was an inevitable consequence of the moral degeneration produced by fascism and the tragedy in which it ended, Mr. Bauer declares. It is also the consequence, he continues, of the political and technical degeneration due to the lack of intelligent personnel qualified to grapple with the tremendously complicated economic and administrative problems. Those who only too hastily were entrusted with these problems were amateurs, improvisers, or politicians without scruples who cared for nothing except the petty interests of their parties.

It must be recognized that the problem of realizing a regulated economy under which political freedom is respected is a *new* problem, the solution of which lies along very different lines from that followed by the "miraculous dictators." A regulated economy, which involves the nationalization of many sections of production and exchange, cannot be approached without caution or realized by outdated methods. The necessary conditions for success of economic regulation are not merely objective, but also subjective, psychological. The transformation of the existing economic order presupposes a new social conscience which must be harmonized with the objective factors directing the objective development toward the new order. A definite democratic development of the state structure is of fundamental importance in this regard. The democratic method, with its inherent polemical character, eliminating belief in miracles, engenders a spirit of carefully considered, progressing and cautious experimentation which is far removed from any mystical ideology. Ends must be in exact harmony with means: objectives and psychological conditions must coincide. In this way the prerequisites for successful democratic planning can be established.

BOOKS

SERGE'S LAST NOVEL

Michael Fraenkel

The Long Dusk [1] is a welcome relief from the flood of novels and books about World War II. It is concerned with the War, to be sure, but only as it is a symptom, among others, of the larger crisis in which the Western world has been involved since the turn of the century, a crisis which makes war inevitable.

Most people tend to look on the military conflicts of our time in purely military terms, as determining rather than resultant phenomena, and so either overestimate or underestimate their importance. Overestimate, because they think the military conflict as such will make for a kind of *tabula rasa,* a fresh start, a new lease on life. Underestimate, because they think it will relieve the underlying tension; they hardly realize to what extent war is itself only another expression of this tension and that far from relieving it, it can only deepen it. Where are we today, almost three years after hostilities have presumably closed? On the brink of another and greater upheaval. More than nineteen million men are under arms, more than thirty-five billion dollars spent annually for "preparedness." Compare these figures with those before 1939, and you see at once that in this respect, too, about all that the War accomplished was to create a universal inflation.

It is to the credit of Victor Serge that he understood all this long before the die was cast and writes from it as a *sine qua non. The Long Dusk* is an imposing, complex and deeply moving picture of France in 1940, against the background of defeat, a defeat which is only the barest physical counterpart of the larger social, moral and intellectual collapse which had occurred long before. Those streams of refugees from all corners of the earth, Poles, Germans, Austrians, Dutchmen, Belgians, Spaniards, Russians, Jews, fleeing before the onrush of the German Panzer divisions, seeking a way out, to the ports, the sea, the frontiers, anywhere . . . "the last republicans of strangled republics, the last socialists of banned parties, the last revolutionaries of defeated revolutions, the last liberals of democracies thrown overboard along with the proletarian revolutions, the last parliamentarians of discredited parliaments, the last idealists of an optimistic and scientific century" . . . those last, last, last men are the symbol of humanity betrayed by itself, trapped in its own impotence, scurrying for cover in a world where there is no more cover, no more

[1] *The Long Dusk* by Victor Serge. 402 pp. The Dial Press. $3.00.

MICHAEL FRAENKEL has contributed to leading journals here and abroad. He is author of *Werther's Younger Brother, Death Is Not Enough* (Essays in Active Negation), *Hamlet,* 2 volumes (with Henry Miller), *The Day Face and the Night Face,* etc. *His Bastard Death* (The Autobiography of an Idea) has just appeared in a new edition. This review was written prior to Serge's death in Mexico on November 18, 1947.

escape, no more refuge. France, heart and nerve center of Western civilization, has become a colossal man-trap. "From the orchards of Normandy, from the plains of Beauce, from Ile de France covered with dry bluish mists, from the gentle and bloody banks of the Somme, from the Seine and the Marne—to the mountains of Auvergne, to Provence still bathed in its tranquil joy of life, to the stern forest of Dordogne, to the deserted Landes, to the cafes of Bordeaux, Toulouse, Marseille, as far as the Pyrennees, to the azure shore of the Mediterranean, the roads of France were given over to this movement of human ants heading for escape, a problematic safety, the unknown." In this stupendous act of somnambulism humanity enacts its inmost plight.

The Long Dusk is an attempt to probe underneath the physical catastrophe and uncover its hidden spiritual and moral causes. Discussing the world plight with one of his fellow refugees, Dr. Simon Ardatov, Russian revolutionary and emigre, remarks at one point: "We lacked a sense of complexity . . . we borrowed an infantile determinism from mechanics and a blind optimism from the prosperous bourgeoisie." "But," he continues hopefully, "there is more falsification of ideas now than real confusion. . . . The main thing is to have strong nerves, everything depends on that." For Ardatov, who is still the good Marxist, the failure of the ideals of science and progress, a failure which has robbed our century of all purpose and meaning, leaving us utterly empty-handed and bewildered, is not due to any weakness inherent in these ideals but rather to their falsification and perversion by unscrupulous leaders and demagogues. It is not the ideals which have failed us but we who have failed the ideals. We were too naive in our optimisms and hopes, we were not sufficiently alive to the depravity and lust for power in the individual, or to its dangers: we invited betrayal. Ardatov can still envision a good society if only courageous, high-minded and disinterested men bestir themselves and clean house. But this is a simplification in itself. . . . Here is where Serge rises to his full stature. He will deceive neither himself nor his reader. Identifying himself as he does with Ardatov, he still has the courage to see beyond this view, to the end of the problem. In the person of Felicien Mûrier, French poet and typical product of a thoroughly disillusioned bourgeois culture, he raises the profounder and more disturbing question: What if mechanization and industrial centralization are inherently inimical to individual freedom and must tend to destroy it? To Mûrier, a mechanistic ideal which can regard writers, for example, as "engineers of souls," or "secret, natural man, the unknowable man," as one who can be put together and taken apart like a turbine, must inevitably culminate in the debasement if not the complete destruction of the individual and the rule of the police state. The most he can hold out for the future is a pattern of society like a "vast rationalized prison" with scientific plumbing, diets, etc. . . . human beings in storage . . . concentration camps. . . .

It is noteworthy that of all the figures that weave their way in and out of the vast tapestry of humanity in this book the one to stand out with the greatest distinctness, with

the fullest impress and authenticity of a real, flesh-and-blood human being is Mûrier. Beside him Ardatov, the author's mouthpiece, pales and appears almost incorporeal, unreal, as if he were no more than an idea leading a life of its own. Curiously enough also, Ardatov disappears at the close of the book like a ghost or wraith—he is treacherously shoved overboard as he stands in the darkness, lost in thought, at the stern of the ship carrying him toward a new world and a new life. Mûrier remains behind, in the quick of the still greater events to come. Consciously and deliberately Serge sought to make Ardatov the hero of his story. The hero who actually emerges is Mûrier. It is this fact, more than anything else, that gives *The Long Dusk* its peculiar sense of inner conflict and ambivalency, as if it were caught between a mild form of optimism—Ardatov whistling in the dark—and an extreme though courageous pessimism — Mûrier carrying on among the ruins. It's the book's essential weakness, but perhaps also its strength. For it reveals the mood of our revolutionary intellectuals today who, like Serge, have already gone pretty far from orthodox Marxism but may yet have to go farther still.

INSIDE STORY OF NAZI CRIMES— THE NUREMBERG RECORD

Josef Guttmann

The trials of the Nazi ringleaders at Nuremberg were supposed to accomplish more than merely punish criminals. Their avowed purpose was to expose the whole Nazi system, to arouse the Conscience of the World, no less. They fell short of this for several reasons.

First, there was the composition of the tribunal. It was not a truly international jury, judging the "crimes against humanity" in the name of all humanity. Anti-Nazi Germans were not allowed to take part in the decisions, although—as was shown in the cases of Papen, Schacht and Fritzsche—they were more severe judges than Allied generals and lawyers. Neutrals were also excluded from the court, and so were the minor Allied nations—in fact everybody except representatives of the Big Four. So the most powerful of the victors tried the vanquished, and no amount of juridical sophistication could remove the impression that the accusers and the judges were identical.

Second, the whole world knew that one of the governments, represented among the judges, was guilty of the same crimes for which the Nazis were condemned: total destruction of civil liberties, illegal and pseudo-legal murder of political opponents, introduction of slave labor and concentration camps, mass deportation of conquered people, and even extermination of whole ethnic groups—not to speak of the breach of international treaties and of attacks against weaker neighbors. This could not add to the moral authority of the court, especially when the prosecution had to avoid a part of the evidence against the Nazis in order not to compromise one of the judging governments.

Perhaps just these weaknesses, felt by the Anglo-American prosecutors,

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JOSEF GUTTMANN is a former Czech journalist who is now on the staff of the Yiddish Scientific Institute. He contributed the article entitled "Limits of Terror" to the April 1947 issue of *Modern Review*.

induced them to try to prove their case thoroughly. That they did; the collective guilt of the leading Nazi clique and the individual guilt of each defendant was proved twenty, a hundred, a thousand times. The accused were buried under carloads of documents, describing every phase of their crimes.

But the result did not quite correspond to the efforts. The trial lasted long months, dealt necessarily with details and technicalities, had to go over the same ground again and again. The reports in the press became shorter and shorter and less and less interesting; even people with special interest in the proceedings finally found it difficult to read the stuff. Today, some minor trials in Germany are still going on; so is, if I am not mistaken, the trial of the main Japanese criminals. But except for some specialists, who knows about it and who cares? Instead of being aroused, the World Conscience seems to have been lulled to sleep.

In the meantime, the first comprehensive official publication dealing with the Nuremberg trials has appeared.[1] It consists of eight volumes and almost 10,000 pages and represents only the American case against the chief Nazi criminals. But as the American prosecutor had to prove Count One of the indictment, the "conspiracy to commit crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity," his evidence is all-inclusive and his documents deal with all aspects of Nazi policy.

Let me hasten to say: the volume contains a real treasure of historic material. There are top-secret reports about diplomatic intrigues in foreign countries, documents on secret armaments before the war, detailed descriptions of the political and military preparations of each of Hitler's international coups from "Case Green," the attack on Czechoslovakia, up to "Operation Barbarossa," the campaign against Russia. You can follow—with the help of these documents—the inside story of such institutions as the SS, the SA, the Gestapo, the concentration camps. There is overwhelming material on the extermination of the Jews, the final stage of which began, according to the documents, much earlier than the Western world believed, i.e., by the summer of 1941 at the latest.

We have here also a series of Hitler's off-the-record speeches to his closest collaborators from the last years before the war. And there are extremely interesting passages. I am not referring here to the evidence that he was preparing the war. Every observer with a little common sense knew that at the time, and only fools argued that all his coups were made "exclusively for inner consumption." But these off-the-record talks confirm what the more sophisticated observers suspected at that time: that the Nazi regime was weak and growing weaker every year. The situation was "now or never!" and the Fuehrer repeated this several times in so many words. If Germany missed its opportunity, he declared bluntly, the situation would develop to its increasing disadvantage with each year of peace after 1940. "Ask the Four-Year-

[1] *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression.* Office of United States Chief of Counsel For Prosecution of Axis Criminality. Vol. I-VIII. Washington, 1946.

Plan Administrator Goering about that," the Fuehrer shouted in one of these conferences. This constitutes a good lesson for people who think that totalitarian regimes are likely to keep the peace because of their inner weaknesses.

Another feature of the documents is that they destroy the legend of the wonderful and inimitable German organization. As a matter of fact, there was the same mess in German warfare and administration as in the camp of the Allies. Even the great Nazi victories in the first period of the war were due more to the blunders of Hitler's opponents than to German abilities. One can find many examples of that in the diary of General Jodl. Reading his reports on some of the military campaigns, one cannot avoid the impression that war is a competition in incompetence between two general staffs: one wins the competition, the other the war. Hitler's "genius" in diplomacy and warfare alike consisted of taking bold chances, the success of which depended upon the stupidity and blunders of his adversaries. In most cases, he had them sized up correctly.

II

The collection omits most of the documents connected with the Hitler-Stalin Pact. But some remain and one is particularly revealing. It is a file on Russo-German relations found in the archives of the High Command of the German Navy.

Here we discover in a report dated September 17, 1939 that the "Russian entry into Poland must be estimated as especially favorable for Germany." Again (September 25) "there is no doubt about Russia's honest attitude," because the "Russian government is convinced of the necessity of cooperation with Germany."

This cooperation was by no means platonic. In October 1939, an English-Russian trade agreement provided for exchange of Russian lumber for British rubber and zinc. The German Navy Command commented: "Rubber and zinc via Russia just as important for Germany as lumber for England. Export of Russian lumber will take place on English or neutral ships from Murmansk, so that German interference remains possible." A nice deal! Germany gets British rubber and zinc from Russia and, duly informed by the Russians about British ship movements; she also has the chance to sink the English ships with their cargoes of lumber on their return trip.

On October 25, 1939, the file states: "Russian economic help is of decisive importance to us." Similar assertions are repeated throughout the diary. Under a July 21, 1940 date-line: "The fuel situation is the most difficult, but as long as Rumania and Russia deliver . . . it is not critical." April 12, 1941, when German preparations for the attack on Russia were almost finished: "Russian attitude—economically cooperative as before. Signing of the new oil delivery treaty." As late as June 4,1941 : "Russian deliveries continue to full satisfaction."

There is direct military cooperation also. In October 1939, Russia allowed German vessels to depart from Murmansk, holding the British back until the German ships were safe. A German naval base was constructed in the North with Russian help. "Valuable Russian assistance" is available for the *Bremen* in Murmansk. In the summer of 1940, a

mysterious German vessel, the *S*-45, probably headed for the Pacific, was passed through the Siberian sea-lanes by the Russians. Russia offered to sell Germany some of her submarines, but the deal was not concluded, according to the High Command documents, because Hitler did not want to show how badly he needed the vessels. Russia asked for the hulls of several German warships under construction, for some naval planes from the *Tirpitz,* and sought blue-prints of some turrets on the *Bismark*. The Germans procrastinated, giving little but promises.

Meanwhile Germany attacked Norway and Denmark, and Russia "declares herself uninterested in the Norway action, shows understanding for German measures." Russia occupied the Baltic states and notified Germany that it was done "to end all intrigues by which the Western powers had attempted in the Baltic states to sow distrust between Russia and Germany." The Nazis attacked Holland, Belgium and France, and the German ambassador in Moscow reported "a very positive position of the Russian press to the German successes of war." Russia invaded Bessarabia and "by German pressure on Rumania, a peaceful settlement is reached."

The mutual distrust of the worthy allies grows, however. In November 1940, Russia declared herself ready to join the Three Power Pact, but the conditions, presented by Molotov, were not acceptable to Hitler, who steps up his preparations for "Operation Barbarossa." The Navy High Command remonstrates with Hitler. It wants to finish England first, but is overruled by the Fuehrer.

The Nazis, preparing to attack Russia, were confident that Russia would not attack them. "As long as Stalin lives, this is impossible," Hitler says again and again to his aides. The appointment of Stalin as Premier in May 1941 is hailed as evidence of the Russian desire "to continue the present foreign policy, to avoid conflict with Germany," and as "an indication of closer cooperation with Germany." Then Moscow withdrew diplomatic recognition from the Norwegian, Belgian and Yugoslav governments-in-exile—with the last named it had concluded a treaty of friendship just one month earlier. On June 7, the German ambassador in Moscow reported that "Stalin and Molotov, who alone are responsible for Russian foreign policy, are doing everything to avoid a conflict with Germany." On June 15, a week before Hitler attacked Russia, Stalin was reported "prepared for extreme concessions." Warnings from England and America were rejected as "imperialist intrigues."

In this situation also, Hitler's plans were made easier by the appeasement policy and outright foolishness of his adversaries. The democracies had no monopoly on blunders.

III

These are only some of the outstanding features of the rich material in the eight volumes. It is difficult, without cumbersome citations, to give the reader an idea of how much interesting material the volumes contain. One could find there precious contributions to every aspect of European history under the Nazis.

One *could,* I said, and the use

of the conditional is not accidental. The real question is whether you actually *can* find anything in the volumes without long and tedious search. I mentioned that the material is priceless. Now I must add that never has such a valuable collection been published in such a messy fashion.

Collections of documents never provide light reading. But they can be made readable and interesting if arranged properly. In this case, the documents could easily have been divided into categories, dealing with different aspects of Nazi policy: seizure of power, terror against the German opposition, aggressive foreign policy, rearmament and preparation for war, inhuman warfare, slave labor and concentration camps, etc. Nazi policies could have been outlined in short, matter-of-fact introductions to each chapter and the main steps of development traced in such a way that each document would have taken its proper place in its historical context.

But let us assume that there was not sufficient time to arrange the collection in this rational manner. Then it would have taken little effort indeed to have arranged the documents in simple chronological order. This would have automatically provided chapter subjects such as: from the foundation of the Nazi Party to the Munich putsch; from this putsch to the seizure of power; from the Reichstag fire to the Roehm crisis; from the beginning of rearmament to Munich; from Munich to the attack on Poland, etc. For this arrangement nothing was necessary except a little common sense and several days' work of a secretary.

The editors chose another "system"—if one can call it that. Colonel Blimp should hide his head in shame; he could never have had such a brilliant idea; i.e., of publishing the documents in the order of their *entry numbers*! The documents were gathered from all over Europe by special teams which did an excellent job in unearthing them from all possible caches. They were dispatched to the American prosecutor's office and were given a file number in order of their arrival. And they are now presented in the order of these file numbers! The effect is inimitable. It is as if one were to thoroughly mix them in one of those spinning drums used for lottery drawings and conscript a child from the audience to draw them out one by one. Documents pertaining to one event are scattered on 20 or 30 places through five or six volumes. Later incidents are dealt with before the main events of which they were a consequence. The twelfth ordinance to some law will appear in Volume III; the fifth, ninth and fourteenth ordinance to the same law in Volume IV, the rest of the ordinances scattered throughout Volume VII, and the law itself, if you have luck, will appear in Volume VIII.

In a word, it is a labyrinth. And if you look for a guide in the form of an index, you will be disappointed. An index was proposed, but then the editors spoiled more than 300 pages of beautiful paper, printing a "Descriptive List of Documents" in the same idiotic order of the entry numbers, with the addition of the places where these documents are mentioned in the prosecution briefs which are contained in the first two volumes.

The same document is often printed twice—once in one volume and again in another—*or even twice*

in one volume in two different translations. The editors apparently were not aware of this. Why should they be, considering the general chaos? But they were aware that the quotations in the briefs sometimes differed from the documentary evidence, for they "explain" these discrepancies. In the preface they state that such variations are to be expected and that one translation is as authentic as the other. So if the translator of a secret circular translates the word *Fahndungsbuch* (i.e., list of persons wanted by the police) to mean "German penal code," and the word *Aufenthaltsermittlungsliste* (list of persons whose whereabouts are to be investigated) as meaning "temporary permit of leave list," we need not become excited. Authenticity in any case is guaranteed.

"Certain passages of some documents may strike the reader as confused and incomplete," states the preface. The instinctive retort is: "You said it, brother," questioning only the word "some." But this is also "explained." Only occasionally, the editors say, is this the result of hasty work; more frequently "the jumble of language accurately reflects the chaos of the original German, for the language of the Nazis was often merely a turgid and mystical aggregation of words signifying nothing, to which the German language easily lends itself. . . ."

Therefore in that well-known and often translated document, the program of the Nazi Party, one reads:

> We demand . . . abolition of unearned (work and labor) incomes. . . .
>
> We demand the nationalization of all (previous) associated industries (trusts).

The Nazi program was nonsense, but not quite such unintelligible nonsense as that. And these sentences were translated from a well-edited declaration in a printed book Imagine what happens in the badly written passages in letters and diaries! They still make sense for people who know German, but were certainly "mystical aggregations of words" for "translators" who simply did not know the language.

I don't want to dwell at any length on the rendering of foreign names. The misprints in the English text are abundant and sometimes amusing, as in the case of the medical report which refers to "an extreme dilation in the *night* chamber." But in the case of English words, the majority are printed correctly and only a minority are misprints. One cannot say as much, however, in the case of the foreign names. Here *Kapp-Putsch* becomes *Kaff-Putsch, Contre-Admiral* becomes *Contor-Admiral,* the late Titulescu is called "an agent of Franco" (instead of France), and the German word *Polizei* is misspelled three different ways on one page.

I am sure that all this—the ridiculous order of the documents, bad translation, misspellings and misprints—is a result of incompetence rather than of malice. But if one were deliberately seeking a way to publish the documents in order to make them as inaccessible and confusing as possible, one could not excell this performance. Considering the value of the material, it is a crying shame.

CONTROVERSY

EDITOR'S NOTE: The two contributions below, one by Harold R. Isaacs, well-known American foreign correspondent and author of No Peace for Asia *and a rebuttal by Raphael R. Abramovitch, a member of the editorial board of* Modern Review, *completes the immediate controversy which began in our previous issue. The editors of* Modern Review *wish to make it clear that they have not associated themselves with either side in this debate. Allowing both points of view to be adequately expressed is in keeping with the open forum character of* Modern Review.

THE QUESTION OF CHOICES

Harold R. Isaacs

In "South Asia's Opportunity" in the last issue of *Modern Review,* I argued that the new countries of South Asia should do everything in their power to keep clear of both American capitalist anarchy and Soviet totalitarianism and should concentrate on combining their own strengths and their own resources as a regional unit. South Asia, not at the moment in the direct path of struggle between the titans, had an opportunity, I wrote, to organize itself for survival and perhaps even to build something new under the sun.

This proposition apparently aroused such consternation in some of the higher editorial reaches of *Modern Review* that it could not be allowed to go forth without an appended comment by Mr. Raphael Abramovitch taking me to task for my errors. By something of a stretch of the better standards of magazine controversy, my reply comes herewith, a month later.

Mr. Abramovitch's point, if I understand it, was that one could not and should not equate American capitalist anarchy and Soviet totalitarianism and that South Asia's new nations would have to take sides in the struggle now in progress, and that of course they should align themselves with the United States. He was particularly exercised over my statement that neither American capitalist anarchy nor Soviet tolitarianism is "pregnant with any decent promise for mankind" and went to great trouble to try to prove that while in Russia's womb there is nothing but a stone to hang around posterity's neck, in America's there is the live embryo of brighter days to come. I think there would be less ground for quarrel if Mr. Abramovitch would agree that in the United States there is at the moment rather a better chance to conceive a better world than there is in Russia. The only trouble is that Mr. Abramovitch and some of his friends are standing around providing a courtiers chorus while the United States goes to bed with Chiang Kai-shek, the Greek king, Emperor Hirohito, Franco and De Gaulle.

Mr. Abramovitch wants South Asia to side with the United States in the world struggle. One of the principal difficulties with this argument is that the United States has neglected to side with South Asia. It has instead in practice aided the old colonial powers in their efforts to

re-establish some degree of control over their Asiatic realms. In Viet Nam and Indonesia it is actually a matter of bitter and brutal warfare in which from the beginning American weapons, ships, planes, tanks, and guns, and subsequently American loans and credits, have played a crucial role. Mr. Abramovitch wants South Asia to determine its orientation not on the basis of these facts but on the abstraction that exists in Mr. Abramovitch's mind and in the state papers on policy ceremonially issued by American diplomats and statesmen on every occasion.

Mr. Abramovitch asks: "What about the 'capitalist anarchy' that triumphed in Asia on V-J Day?" Well, what about it? Mr. Abramovitch seems to be suggesting that it represented a victory of unalloyed virtue full of promise and hope. Here again, Mr. Abramovitch can, in his hopeless insulation from reality, deal safely with abstractions. The ironic fact is that the victory of American capitalist anarchy over Japanese imperialism in Asia has, so far, worsened the conditions and the prospects of the Asiatic peoples to an extraordinary degree. Korea was better off a whole slave than dismembered into two half-slaves. Japanese-occupied China was certainly better off than Chiang Kai-shek's China or Communist-dominated Manchuria is today. As grotesquely distorted and dominated by Japanese imperial ambitions as it was, Japanese rule in South Asia laid the basis for national independence of the former colonies while the American victory has simply created favorable conditions for a major effort to restore colonial rule. These are paradoxes. They also happen to be part of the truth that does not fit into Mr. Abramovitch's glib patterns.

The prime reason for these conditions is, of course, the fact that the defeat of Japan ushered in not a new era of dynamic reconstruction but a new era of blind struggle for power between imperialist Russia and the United States. In that struggle the United States is dooming itself by allowing Russia to have a monopoly of exploiting the acute social crisis in Asia and in Europe, by surrendering to Russia's Communist stooges the role of catalyst in an age of desperately needed change. The United States, certainly, is not making notable contributions to China's or South Asia's "standard of living, political and spiritual freedom, human rights, personal dignity"—and, as Mr. Abramovitch feelingly adds—"last but not least, national sovereignty." On the contrary, in its own way it is impairing all of these just as totalitarian Russia is impairing them elsewhere. For that matter, what is happening to these things right here in the United States? Are we making strides in an effective struggle against Soviet totalitarianism by surrendering to a pathological hysteria in which we aim our blows at Stalin's stooges and actually strike down our own most elementary democratic rights? There is a direct link between this hysteria here at home and the American failure to stand for any kind of progressive change in Asia or elsewhere, and its alliances instead with the most backward kind of colonial and semi-fascist reaction.

There is upon all of us the responsibility to try to change the content and direction of America's internal and external policies. But I

would hate to ask our friends in South Asia to stake their whole immediate future on our success. On the contrary, they have to deal with nations and forces as they are. And while they have the chance, they will be wisest if they try to strengthen the ground under their own feet by uniting among themselves. Only the degree to which they succeed in doing that will determine their ability to survive when, in Mr. Abramovitch's words, the Russian-American struggle comes to its "eventual showdown."

ONE MUST STILL CHOOSE

Raphael R. Abramovitch

So it was well after all that I wrote "marginal notes" to Mr. Isaacs' article in the December issue of *Modern Review*. My arguments compelled the author to make an important strategic retreat. He does it reluctantly, but he does it just the same. He admits that his original thesis—that capitalist USA and totalitarian USSR *are both without any decent promise for mankind*—is erroneous. He agrees that "in the United States there is at the moment rather a better chance to conceive a better world than there is in Russia."

Mr. Isaacs lacks the moral courage to admit that in essence that was the thesis I advanced in opposition to his own. Instead, he throws invectives at me and "some of my friends." What is more important, however, is that he lacks the intellectual ability to draw the proper conclusions from his new position. He fails to realize that his original conclusions, however wrong, were at least consistent with his premise, whereas his newly-adopted premise is inconsistent with his conclusions.

Russia, which Mr. Isaacs himself considers a totalitarian state without any decent hope for mankind, is waging now, and will continue to wage, a war of aggression and subjugation against all other countries of the world. In the recent message of the Central Committee of the All-Soviet Communist Party to the Cominform, the masters of the Kremlin state that the class struggle, having been eliminated in the USSR, now takes on an international aspect and presents itself sharply, from the viewpoint of the Russian regime, as the "inevitable

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battle between Capitalism, as personified by the USA and Socialism as represented by the Soviet Union." This is not mere propaganda. Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Zhdanov are in deadly earnest about that; they mean business.

In the present world situation every country, every people, and every writer has to "take sides." Do we desire the victory of Russia in the cold war and then in the ensuing shooting war, or do we prefer the victory of the other coalition which will embrace purely capitalist countries like the USA, semi-Socialist states like Great Britain, or democratic states in "transiton" from capitalism to various forms of collectivism, and probably also a few not very democratic, but relatively unimportant, "satellites"? This question has to be faced whether we like it or not. There is no possibility of dodging the question, for no nation can know whether or not it will be "in the direct path of struggle between titans."

I still vividly remember the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International in March 1940 at which we were told by the Scandinavian delegates that the Scandinavian countries hoped to save themselves by remaining neutral, because at the moment they were not "in the direct path of struggle." The Norwegian delegates had scarcely reached home before Norway was invaded by the Nazis.

We must all become conscious of our responsibility in this historic situation. It demands the courage to see the truth and to speak it. The truth is that we *have* to choose and that the choice must be made on the criterion of relativity. This choice is between a system which is entirely black and hopeless and the alternative which is by no means shining white, but which offers, nevertheless, a better chance for a brighter future.

Instead of enumerating for the thousandth time all the evils of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, of Greek kings and De Gaulle, which are so well known to every Yipsel, instead of indulging in political obstetrics and bad-taste analogies, Mr. Isaacs would do better by attempting to think through to its logical end, the political reality and dynamics of the coming period of human history.

IRON CURTAIN PENETRATED

I was delighted to read that the regular pre-war exchange of animals from the London and Moscow Zoos has now been started again. Apparently there is no rigidity in the transaction and no insistence on an exact *quid pro quo*. The animals so far given by Moscow to London include a lynx and a pair of geese of singular beauty and rarity. Moscow is not deterred by the absence of immediate reciprocity and is content to rely on the good faith of the London Zoo. I hope we will return the compliment with suitable promptitude and that the courtesies will extend to wider fields. Can Mr. Molotov, for instance, be persuaded to reconsider the plight of the twelve Soviet wives whose separation from their British husbands no doubt seems a triviality in Moscow but in England assumes the dimensions of an important issue of principle? If animals can come, why not human beings?—*New Statesman and Nation.*